

Strikers block supplies to firefighting soldiers

As the firemen's strike showed signs of hardening yesterday, a barracks at Bootle, Merseyside, was picketed with the aim of halting supplies to firefighting troops. At a Downing Street meeting with Mr Callaghan senior fire officers' leaders called for a conference of all parties to he dispute.

Union move today to dissuade pickets

By Donald Macintyre
Labour Reporter

Senior Fire Brigades Union representatives are expected to move today to dissuade their striking members from obstructing troops carrying out fire

lution. The strike was hardening yesterday as the union sent all TUC-affiliated unions an appeal for financial and "other forms" of support.

In Bootle on Merseyside a picket was mounted with the aim of stopping supplies to 100 soldiers of the 3rd Battalion, The Queen's Regiment, who had been newly transferred to fresh quarters from barracks that had been criticized for lack of amenities.

"The PBU executive decided on Tuesday to exclude from its ranks to spread the dispute through other unions any tem to stop supplies of fuel to firefighting troops.

Mr Robert Roxburgh, PBU, Bootle branch secretary, said yesterday that the union's aim must be to make "life as difficult as possible" for the drivers.

He added: "We have stopped construction electricians

and plumbers going in, and an to turn away all routine jobs, including milk and gas."

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Trinity Road, said last night: "This is going to be the union, we shall have to range for the necessary sup-

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other officials of the PBU.

It has been anxious not to

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The union's policy is that

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The union acknowledges that

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Part of the explanation

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There have been similar

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port and General Workers' Union

is understood to have made clear that that is not part of union policy.

Supportive action of other

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It recalls that the Prime

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The circular calls for unions to give financial support and

"any other form of support for the union's present action which might apply to the membership of your union at local or national level".

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HOME NEWS

Council workers to lead new onslaught on 10% pay guideline

By Paul Rourledge
Labour Editor

The Government is facing a renewed onslaught on its income policy from unions in the public sector, and the TUC is to take up the striking firemen's plea for a pay rise.

That twin threat to wage after local authority union leaders had failed to agree an adds 10.7 per cent to the pay bill. They are asking the employers, the same as those caught up in the firemen's strike for talks on an improved deal.

Miners' leaders are to meet the National Coal Board this morning for the first round of talks on their claim for rises from November 1 or about 90 per cent to give face workers £135 a week, having rejected the NCB's letter saying that they cannot have a rise until next March under the TUC's 12-month rule.

The Iron and Steel Trades Confederation yesterday put its rises for 72,000 heavy steel workers in the state steel-making industry, which is suffering huge financial losses. There were also talks on the union's demands for more than 30,000 white-collar grades.

As the tempo of pay bargaining quickens, Mr Len Murray, general secretary of the TUC, said the Fire Brigades Union request for assistance had been received and would go through the procedures laid down in such cases.

That is likely to be considered by the TUC's "inner council", is finance and general purposes committee, which may be called into special session to progress the firemen's appeal. Mr Alan Fisher, a member of the committee and general secretary of the National Union of Public Employees (Nupe) said last night that the TUC might seek

Fatal fire is tackled by Gurkha troops

By Robin Young
Consumer Affairs
Correspondent

A man and two women died in fires at their homes yesterday. Another woman died after being rescued.

Mr James Larkins, aged 50, died in a fire at his home at Sandhurst, Berkshire, which was tackled by Gurkha soldiers. Flames prevented their reaching him. His mother, Mrs Sarah Larkins, aged 80, was rescued earlier by building workers.

Striking firemen at Bracknell left their picket lines to help, but the fire was under control when they arrived.

Mrs Isobel Reed, aged 61, a widow died in a fire at her home at Felling, Tyne and Wear, despite attempts by two soldiers to rescue her.

Mrs Kim Crook, aged 29, of Clarence Street, Penzance, Cornwall, died in a fire at her home.

Mrs Annie Clay Parry, aged 54, was dead on arrival at hospital after being rescued by police officers from an upstairs room at her home at Middleton, Greater Manchester. Picketing firemen left their station at Heywood to help.

Five firemen, including two senior fire officers, were injured in a fire that wrecked an empty hall of a special school in Doncaster. One was believed to have broken his shoulder. The fire at Ingatestone School, Birkington, near Newbury, Abber, was fought by retained firemen.

Families were moved out of 16 flats on the first four floors of Eastville Heights, a 22-storey block at Toxteth, Liverpool, when a fire broke out in an electricity substation feeder.

The Nasfi is presenting games to the value of £5,000 to servicemen on stand by fire duties. Mr Edward MacGowan, managing director, said: "These men are our customers and we are doing a job of work they did not seek."

Lord Wootton, president of the Confederation of British Industry, yesterday urged the Government to stand firm on the firemen's strike. Speaking in Birmingham, he said the outcome was crucial to the great number of pay claims still in the pipeline.

He accepted that the firemen had a good case but insisted that it could be met only in the long-term. They should continue to talk about reduced hours and the possibility of productivity schemes because there was no way they could be allowed to bulldoze their claim, he said.

Christopher Walker writes from Belfast: The Army said yesterday that since the firemen's strike began, 26 incendiary bombs had been planted in business premises in Northern Ireland. A further 16 "blast incendiaries", cans of petrol attached to charges of explosive, and four other bombs of more conventional design had also been planted.

The Provisional IRA's fire-bombing campaign continued yesterday when four armed men used a mechanical digger to break down the doors of a large printing works near the centre of Belfast. They planted four bombs, two of which exploded soon after the staff had fled.

Striking firemen in Ulster

stood to be willing to relaunch the papers without victimization. The company is willing to enter pay negotiations with all members not backing the strike. That would affect about 400 part-time firemen.

Warnings to parents cover skateboards and plastic playthings

Sturdy and simple toys make the best gifts

By Robin Young
Consumer Affairs
Correspondent

The sort of toys most likely to make satisfactory Christmas presents are sturdy and well made, versatile enough to be used in different sorts of play and simple enough to allow children to use their imagination, according to the December issue of *Which?* magazine, published today.

Which? kept track of the fate of children's Christmas presents in 70 families last year. Gifts that failed to arouse interest were often too young or too old for the child, while many plastic toys broke too easily. Parents complained about expensive but disappointing games packaged in smart boxes, and the influence of television advertising on children.

Lego and toys from the Fisher-Price range often came out well in members' reports. Children should be given a say in choosing their skateboards, the magazine says, parents acting as "engineering consultants". It advice is that plastic or solid wooden decks are best for beginners, and that the

board should have suspension allowing the board to move from side to side as well as up and down. It also found that children preferred boards with "kicktail" curves, helpful in performing such stunts as kick turns and wheelies.

In bicycles, however, the children did not necessarily like the flattest models. "Many preferred bikes that were easy to pedal fast and easy to control", the magazine reports. The most popular with children, the Hughes Delt Squirt at £17, was not cheap, but *Which?* rates it "good but pricey" while nominating four other models "good value".

Striking a less seasonal note, *Which?* also published by the Consumers' Association, has been examining the costs of having children at all. It found that a typical couple would face a bill of £15,000 at today's prices if they decide to have a baby. Having two

children would cost them £23,800.

The figures take into account state contributions to the cost of raising a family. State education would cost £5,600 for each child over the years, and grants, benefits and tax reliefs take £3,100 off the bill for the first child and about £2,700 for the second.

To soften the blow, and help parents to feel they can still afford Christmas presents this year, *Money Which?* lists the main state benefits available to help to meet the cost of children.

There is no special provision, however, for cases like that of the three-year-old girl mentioned in *Which?* as having abandoned the toy rabbit, Jig saw, amara, paintbox and Pop-a-point pencil given her last year among presents costing £21. Her verdict, quoted in the magazine, is: "Next Christmas, I want a gun."

Sheriff says authorities tried to scare him off

Sheriff Peter Thomson, the Scottish judge who faces dismissal from office because of alleged political activities, said yesterday that the authorities had tried to frighten him off. He also said in Glasgow that he intended to continue campaigning for an impartial plebiscite on Scotland's constitutional future.

Sheriff Thomson, aged 63, said he supposed there were ways in which he could have saved himself from the present situation, in which the Secretary of State was seeking his removal from office.

"I consider I am doing my duty," he said. "I think the wish of the authorities has been to frighten me off to stop. I think this is pretty clear. Let us say they were doing it for what they thought was my own good."

Sheriff Thomson said he hoped to be settled in the Commons on Monday when his case is to be discussed, and that he hoped MP's would exclude sympathy from their deliberations.

"I am in a better position than they are", he said. "The worst that can happen to me is that I shall have to join the dole queue. The worst that can happen to them is that they will have to live with themselves, knowing that they have opened a gate."

"The could create a precedent for our future which none of us can foresee. It would be the same as the Government closing a newspaper for political activities."

The concept of confounding or recurrent education was gaining ground. Mature adults need to be able to return to education and training throughout their lives.

We should think in terms of a student-centred rather than an institution-centred in post-college education, with many combinations of attendance, subjects and levels of study, she said.

She hoped the new Advisory Council for Adult and Continuing Education would significantly help to develop a coherent approach to recurrent education.

Miss Jennifer Davis, who won a legal battle on Monday to have her allegedly violent lover evicted from their flat, returned home yesterday to find it empty.

Mr Nehemiah Johnson had moved out in the morning and the furniture went with him. Miss Davis and her daughter, Cordelia, aged two, had to spend another night at the Chiswick refuge for battered wives, where they have been staying since October 3.

She hopes to move back into her £751 a week council flat today, if Hackney Borough Council can find her some furniture.

Miss Davis was given the right to the flat, on which she had a joint tenancy with her lover, when five judges of the Court of Appeal ruled on Monday by three to two that the Domestic Violence and Matrimonial Proceedings Act, 1976, applied to unmarried, as well as married women.

Lord Denning, Master of the Rolls, said social justice demanded that personal rights should take priority over property rights and that a woman had the right to live without fear in her home.

Accompanied by two staff workers from Chiswick Women's Aid and two women from the house, Miss Davis found only two plastic ornaments and some plates in the kitchen cupboard of her flat.

She said she was happy to be back but horrified to find the place empty. "I had not expected to find it like this," she said. She disputed Mr Johnson's right to remove the furniture which included beds, a settee and a colour television set, and said she would wait through the courts to get them back if necessary.

Miss Davis hopes eventually to get a transfer from her two-bedroom flat, which she and Mr Johnson moved into in May, because she does not want Mr Johnson to know where she is. Meanwhile people from the Chiswick hostel will stay with her.

Mr Johnson has said he intends to appeal to the House of Lords.

70m dangerous electric plugs in homes

By Our Consumer Affairs Correspondent

More than 70 million potentially dangerous electric plugs are in use in homes in Britain, according to a survey published yesterday by the Electrical Research Association.

The association was commissioned to survey the condition of electric plugs in 1976. Of 1,503 plugs inspected, 432 (29 per cent) were faulty.

Some had large chips, leaving live terminals exposed; others were held together only by adhesive tape and the flex wires. The commonest deficiency was ineffective cord grips, straining the terminal connections and sometimes pulling them loose.

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Weather forecast and recordings



TIME



There was a distinct lack of bicycles about the place.

The students had packed their bags and gone home. By the time they returned, the college gardeners would be sweeping leaves.

It was a time for reflection, and as he crossed the quadrangle, Professor Marchant was beginning to wonder if he'd lost his touch.

Not long ago he could have counted on a packed house at the start of every lecture. Even for Milton.

But recently his students were turning up as much as a quarter of an hour late.

The professor glanced up at the clocktower as the hour was striking... eight, nine, ten. He looked at his Omega. Thirteen minutes past? Yes, thirteen minutes past.

No question about it.

Professor Marchant performed an adroit about-turn and hurried off to seek out Weekes, the janitor.

HOME NEWS

Lord Todd answers critics of universities with reminder of their 'superb' aid to expansion

By Pearce Wright
Science Editor

Lord Todd, President of the Royal Society, suggested yesterday there were serious misunderstandings about the best way to encourage and harness scientific research in the United Kingdom.

He also said: "In these days of rampant egalitarianism our concern for an elite in science may be regarded by some as outmoded. But it is, not. In science the best is infinitely more important than the second best: that is the belief of the society, and a country that ignores or forgets it does so at its peril."

Giving the anniversary address to the society, Lord Todd described the present as a disappointing period in British history. "Coming on a stream of oil from the North Sea does not conceal the fact that the white-hot technological revolution were were promised never came to pass and the pound in the pocket is far from being what it used to be", he said.

"In much of industry there has been so little growth for so long that some manufacturers are allowing plants to run down and even skimping on the research and development that must surely be essential to any regeneration of British industry."

At a time of youth's unsatisfied aspirations for opportunity, of growing egalitarianism often coupled with a lowering of educational standards, those working in education, and especially in higher education, sensed today in the contrast between the Government's enthusiastic launching of the Royal Commission in 1963 and the present stagnation.

Some feared that our universities might be irreparably damaged as a result of the present crisis. He did not share their pessimism. British intellectual life remained as vigorous as ever. Scientific research was still flushed with success and full of promise. During the period 29 fellows of the society won Nobel Prizes, and had made outstanding contributions in many fields: radioastronomy, astrophysics, chemistry, neurophysiology, plant genetics and molecular biology.

But in the present economic gloom the cry went up: "What has all this exciting work done for the country's economic problems?" Consequently politicians asked why a country in such economic straits should support academic research. Had not the time come when the universities should be harnessed to regeneration of the economy and research devoted to the needs of manufacturing industry: to making better transistors or cars or sewing machines?

"Such criticisms are based upon a profound misunder-

standing of what universities are for and on a failure to appreciate what they have done since the last war. It is too easily forgotten that between the forces and the Robbins report in 1963, government, industry and indeed the country at large, was crying out for more and more trained scientists and engineers.

Second was the advancing of the frontiers of knowledge. To fulfil that dual role, academic research must be essentially uncommitted. That was not to say that it should have no objective; all research must be committed to that extent; but it should not be dominated by short-term practical or economic reasons.

For that reason, he believed, proposals for joint industry-university PhD courses, or that universities should orient their research to meet specific industrial needs, were misguided. Industry was the proper place for industrial research.

That did not belittle many contributions made incidentally by university departments to industrial research and development.

There is often talk of a gap between certain industries and the university departments of science and technology related to them. But to the extent that it exists it is a gap of understanding which can be put right by closer personal contacts. It will not be closed by endeavouring to make university research departments do the job of industry or vice versa.

The universities clearly had enough technically trained people to satisfy its needs. "Moreover, we have lived through the period when the burgeoning universities and polytechnics were two of the principal consumers of their own products: trained and talented young people."

People who complained that universities had become irrelevant forgot that they had accomplished economically and without fuss the enormous task of expansion they were set by the nation less than 15 years ago.

Complaints were made of something wrong in the education of scientists and technologists because many companies found that new graduates did not slip easily into their new roles in industry. But it did not follow that there was anything radically wrong with the courses. Accreditation of recruits in industry had always been difficult. The reasons for this dissatisfaction that undoubtedly existed were more subtle.

It could be argued that in our rush to expand university education we had succumbed to the stream of tertiary education a substantial number of those who might have been more appropriately trained through the more vocational education that was the function of polytechnics.

Although minor changes could be made, Lord Todd saw nothing fundamentally wrong with university training in science and technology for those who were to play a leading role in industry, and especially for those who were more appropriately trained through the more vocational education that was the function of polytechnics.

On top of that, the acute financial stringency experienced by the universities in recent years, coupled with an easing of the pressure on entries, had caused universities to restrict severely the filling of posts that were created and filled by young men and women of effectively the same age group, all of them with many years of service ahead before retirement.

The Government's response to the select committee's view that the railways have an important future and that no big cuts need be made in the present system.

The 1977 forecasts, included

in the Government's response, show £439m direct costs and £523m indirect costs for the railway passenger business, against a revenue of £565m.

"Intra-City, with revenue of £275m and costs of £162m, is expected to contribute £113m to indirect costs, and London and South-east, with revenue of

£217m and costs of £165m, should contribute £52m.

But cross-country services, with costs of £65m and revenue of £43m, are expected to fail by £26m to meet even their direct costs, and provincial city services, with costs of £43m and revenue of £30m, should fail by £13m. Total government support to British Rail passenger services this year is estimated at £56m.

Commuter difficulties: Mr Peter Parker, chairman of British Rail, called yesterday for a public debate on the deeply serious issues of some most commutes and fares.

Defending the railways' decision to raise commuter fares by 16 per cent in January compared with 14 per cent for travellers generally, Mr Parker said that was where the costs arose, and common sense dictated a recognition of that reality.

The underuse of enormous assets, generally for only four hours a day, created special difficulties in London and the South-east, which could not be met by waving a magic wand.

It was a "very deep problem", which raised complicated issues and deserved more public discussion than it had received.

Speaking at the opening of a

redevelopment of Blackfriars station, Mr Parker said the development land tax might frustrate further schemes such as that proposed for Liverpool Street.

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But cross-country services, with costs of £65m and revenue of £43m, are expected to fail by £26m to meet even their direct costs, and provincial city services, with costs of £43m and revenue of £30m, should fail by £13m. Total government support to British Rail passenger services this year is estimated at £56m.

Commuter difficulties: Mr Peter Parker, chairman of British Rail, called yesterday for a public debate on the deeply serious issues of some most commutes and fares.

Defending the railways' decision to raise commuter fares by 16 per cent in January compared with 14 per cent for travellers generally, Mr Parker said that was where the costs arose, and common sense dictated a recognition of that reality.

The underuse of enormous assets, generally for only four hours a day, created special difficulties in London and the South-east, which could not be met by waving a magic wand.

It was a "very deep problem", which raised complicated issues and deserved more public discussion than it had received.

Speaking at the opening of a

redevelopment of Blackfriars station, Mr Parker said the development land tax might frustrate further schemes such as that proposed for Liverpool Street.

The Government welcomes the select committee's view that the railways have an important future and that no big cuts need be made in the present system.

The 1977 forecasts, included

in the Government's response,

show £439m direct costs and £523m indirect costs for the

passenger business, against a revenue of £565m.

"Intra-City, with revenue of

£275m and costs of £162m, is

HOME NEWS

Schoolchildren 'put on drugs because class behaviour does not fit'By Mark Vaughan, of *The Times* Educational Supplement

Tens of thousands of children are being put on long-term programmes of drug therapy simply because their behaviour does not fit in with the requirements of their schools, according to an article in this week's issue of *The Sunday Times*.

Mr Steven Box, lecturer in sociology at Kent University, Canterbury, says there is a "scandalous silence" surrounding such "violence on schoolchildren". The reason for giving drugs to more and more children to control their behaviour is that they are diagnosed as "hyperactive", he adds.

However, he maintains there has so far been a complete failure by the medical world, or education authorities, to prove that hyperactivity is a genuine disease.

Last night the Department of Health and Social Security commented: "There are no cases of abuse or wrongful prescribing of drugs in the way the article suggests is happening. Hyperactive is not a term the department uses."

"School medical doctors do not prescribe drugs. They can be prescribed only by a general practitioner, hospital or in the case of mental health, a psychiatrist."

In his article Mr Box says treatment given to schoolchildren includes individual psychotherapy, behaviour therapy, and in some cases brain surgery. But by far the most favoured method of treatment is drug therapy.

He says there is a whole industry in America based on drugging children to be submissive, with between 500,000 and a million children diagnosed as hyperactive. He argues that there are worrying signs that the same approach by teachers, education authorities and the medical world is being hounded in British classrooms.

Although hyperactivity is less well documented than Mr Box's "epidemic" of psychosomatic disorders among schoolchildren taking place, on a scale similar to that in the United States, though on a much smaller scale.

Mr Box notes that the Department of Health and Social Security

of Education and Science says that hyperactivity is an important symptom of maladjustment. In 1950, he says, 587 full-time pupils were identified as hyperactive. By 1970 the total was more than 5,000, and two years ago was nearly 14,000.

The typical procedures for diagnosing hyperactivity are disturbing, Mr Box says, because they have nothing to do with drugs but everything to do with deviancy.

Hyperactivity "violates important school norms about paying attention to teacher, obeying teacher, and being responsive to teacher's wishes, instructions or commands; not interfering with other children; delivering teacher's book or abetting teacher; physically assaulting teacher; not miscreating or damaging school property; being orderly and disciplined".

American schools, particularly in poor Negro ghettos, and English schools in urban slums and ethnically mixed areas, are being transformed from places where children attended educational courses to places where they receive courses in medical treatment.

Mr Box says the main drugs being administered to hyperactive schoolchildren are stimulants such as methylphenidate, dexamphetamine and magnesium pemoline. Only in a minority of cases are non-stimulants being given.

Since there is no physical sign of disease, he says, the favourite procedure is to look at a child's behaviour, in the classroom, in group participation and attitude toward authority. "Hyperactive" classroom behaviour includes, according to Mr Box, fidgeting, humming, moving and noises, or being easily frustrated.

He argues that during high chronic unemployment, many schoolchildren, particularly lower-class and ethnically underprivileged boys, "naturally cause problems".

The frustration and humiliation they experience show in delinquency, truancy, disobedience and other behaviour that upsets figures of authority, including parents and especially teachers. Drugs are then administered to dampen and confuse the child's scarcely heard protests."

New powers from today on violence by squatters

Important provisions of the Criminal Law Act 1977, take effect from today, including new powers over squatting and removal of the fence of conspiracy.

Part I of the Act means that the offence of conspiracy is restricted to agreements to commit criminal offences, and the penalty will be more closely linked to the penalty for the completed offence.

Part II replaces common law on such areas as forcible entry and detainer, where someone has entered peacefully but maintains possession by force. Five specific offences are created, including using or threatening violence to secure entry where another person is present, and failing to leave when required to do so by a displaced resident or protected intending occupier.

The Campaign against a Criminal Trespass Law said that this legal change might threaten people taking part in work-ins or sit-ins, and a national scheme is being organized to keep a watch on the working of the new law.

Other provisions include extending the scope of the Obscene Publications Act, 1959, which means that the police can now deal with "blue" films used on film above 16mm in ordinary cinemas. In future members of the public will be unable to bring private prosecutions and the consent of the Director of Public Prosecutions will be required before a prosecution can be taken.

In driving cases, the concept of "dangerous" driving or cycling is removed from the Road Traffic Act, 1972.



The Prince of Wales with four cartoons of himself by Barry Fantoni at the London Press Club's exhibition in aid of the jubilee appeal.

Inquiry into rate-support grantBy Christopher Warman
Local Government Correspondent

The Association of Metropolitan Authorities has ordered an inquiry into the distribution of next year's government rate-support grant to find out why some authorities suffering from urban deprivation have failed to benefit.

Already, local authorities particularly in county areas have said that it will be difficult to keep rate rises in the 10 per cent national average forecast by the Government

18 by Mr Shore, Secretary of State for the Environment, the AMA held a seminar in London to discuss the matter.

Mr Jack Shore, chairman, congratulated Mr Shore for adopting the distribution formula they wanted, a move to favour the inner cities and areas with high levels of urban difficulties.

But he added: "A few authorities with urban deprivation problems did not benefit. We do not yet know why these anomalies occurred and we intend to discover how they happened."

Welsh language is in decline, report saysFrom Tim Jones
Cardiff

The Welsh language is dying. That is the inescapable conclusion of a report into Welsh social trends published today by the Welsh Office. It seems that after holding fast against German invasion and bygone discriminatory legislation, the language is succumbing to the mass media and English immigration. When the latter that presented school children from speaking their native tongue failed, Kojac and *Rock Follies*, it seems, are succeeding.

The report shows that the number of people who speak Welsh has dropped by almost 40 per cent over the 50 years 1921-71. Now the language is at the crossroads, for only 5 per cent of the Principality's 2,766,000 were able to speak Welsh in 1971.

The great rural counties of Gwynedd and Dyfed, which span the whole of west Wales, remain a stronghold of the language, but the situation is not encouraging. Evidence shows that the apparent strength of the language in those areas partly rests on the outward migration of the younger Welsh-speaking people.

In other sectors the report shows that a lower proportion of the population at Level or equivalent in Wales than elsewhere in Britain. Household size is greater in Wales than in Britain, but the number of earners to a household is lower.

While average household income and expenditure have increased rapidly over the past few years, the Welsh salary levels remain less than 90 per cent of the United Kingdom average.

The proportion of income derived from wages and salaries is lower in Wales, but the proportion received from social security benefits is substantially higher.

Welsh Social Trends (Statistical Office, Cardiff, £3.50).

New help for the homeless becomes effective todayBy Pat Healy
Social Services Correspondent

All homeless people are entitled to some help from their housing authorities under the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act, which comes into force in England and Wales today. But only those who fall within priority groups and who have not made themselves homeless will be entitled to permanent accommodation.

The new Act recognizes that homelessness is so widespread that it can no longer be treated as an emergency to be met by temporary accommodation, but is a basic housing matter demanding that the people affected should be rehoused permanently. The main purpose

is to make housing authorities, which have pools of accommodation available, help homeless people instead of leaving it to social service authorities to provide temporary accommodation for those in urgent need.

The priority groups include families with dependent children, pregnant women, people vulnerable because of old age, mental illness or handicap or physical disability and those homeless because of an emergency such as fire, flood or other disaster. The main groups excluded are the single homeless and childless couples, but housing authorities must nevertheless help them to find their own accommodation.

Two special hostels openFrom John Chartres
Manchester

Manchester claimed yesterday that the opening today of two hostels makes the city the first big housing authority in Britain to eliminate hotel bed-and-breakfast accommodation for homeless families and the first to respond to the new Housing (Homeless Persons) Act.

The hostels, in Didsbury and Chorlton-cum-Hardy, with an existing hostel at Moorbank.

provide temporary accommodation for 40 homeless families. Their average length of stay is expected to be between three and four weeks. Families will then move to permanent homes provided by the city housing department or to private accommodation arranged by themselves.

Both hostels, formerly hotels, were acquired by the city council when it had more than 50 families in bed-and-breakfast accommodation.

Benefit scheme 'in danger of collapse'

By Our Social Services Correspondent

So many people now depend on supplementary benefit that the scheme is in danger of collapse, the Child Poverty Action Group says today in evidence to the review of the entire scheme. At the same time both the long-term unemployed and children are penalized because the basic benefit rates are too low to meet their needs, it adds.

The group argues that the review will be pointless if it simply provides minor reforms to the scheme, which Professor David Donnison, chairman of the Supplementary Benefits Commission, has said is so complicated that the staff administering it often cannot understand it. Instead, the review should recommend changes to other parts of the social security system to reduce the numbers of people dependent on supplementary benefit.

"The setting up of the review has raised expectations of major reform. For the sake of the 4,750,000 people dependent on supplementary benefit in this country these expectations must not be dashed."

The review was set up in September 1976, after the commission's first annual report had criticized the way the scheme had developed. The results are expected next year.

The group says the review should propose increases in the other main social security benefits, particularly national insurance and disability benefits. It should come out firmly in favour of a generous child-benefit scheme.

atching up the Safety Net, the Ulster Child Poverty Action group, 1 Macklin Street, London, WC2, 82p.

More than half au pair girls are overworked'

By David Nicholson-Lord

A survey showing that well over half the au pair girls in Britain are overworked by their host families has been presented to the Home Office as part of a new campaign to secure more protection for foreign girls.

The survey, one of the most comprehensive undertaken and covering 1,024 girls throughout the country, was designed by London University Computing Services to provide comparisons with the advice contained in the Home Office booklet, *Au Pair in Britain*.

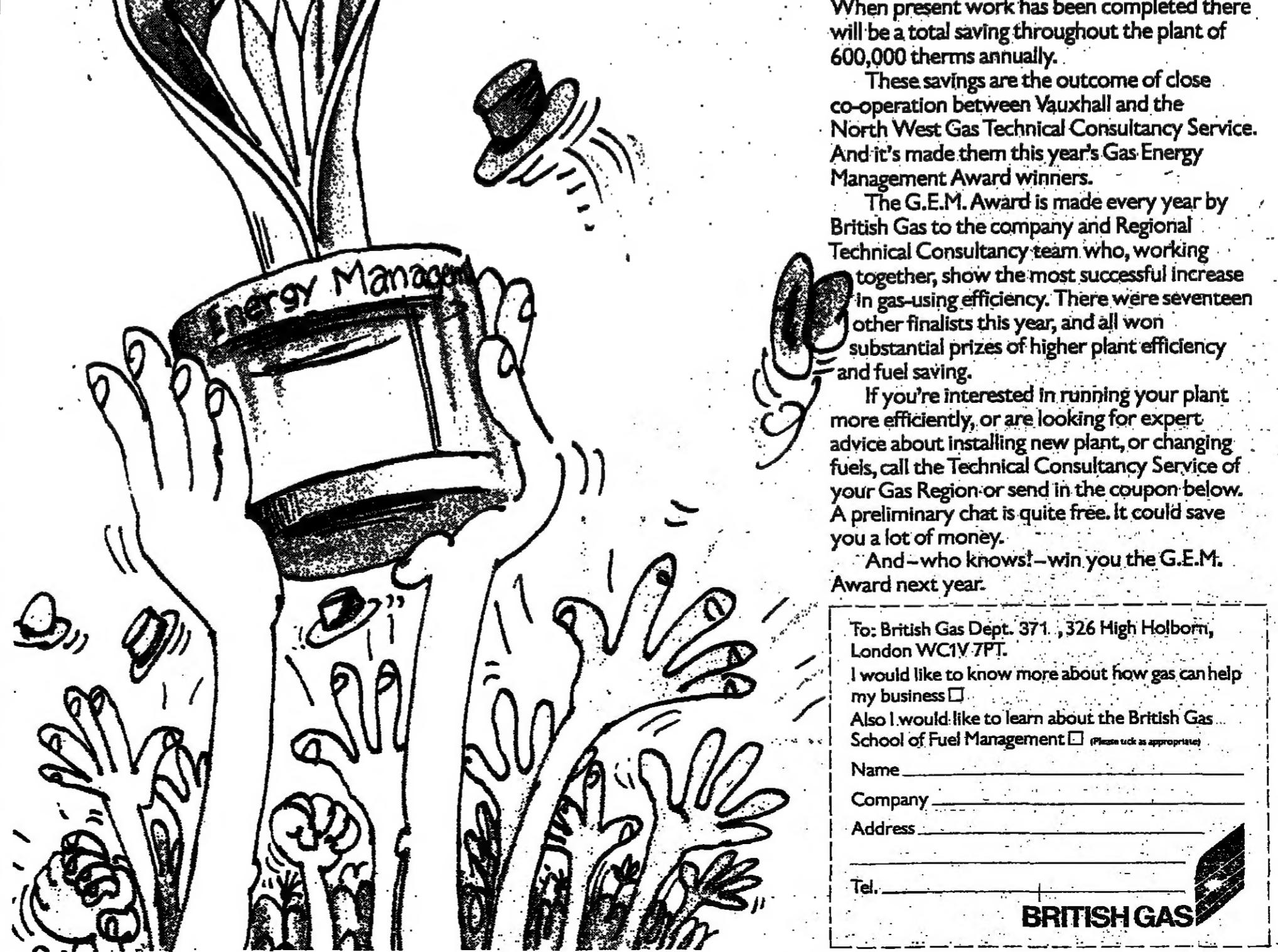
According to the survey, 60 per cent of the girls work more than the 30 hours a week recommended by the Home Office, 12 per cent work more than 50 hours and 67 per cent did not receive a copy of the official booklet, as they were untrained to when they entered Britain.

Of those questioned, 29 per cent changed their host families after their arrival. The main reasons included overwork, lack of free time and time to study, and unsatisfactory living conditions. Two thirds of those who work more than 30 hours receive less than 29 weekly pocket money.

Don Placid Mevlink, chairman of International Youth Welfare, which sponsored the questionnaire, said yesterday that it provided positive evidence of the very unsatisfactory position of au pair girls in Britain.

"A large number of girls are exploited and used as cheap domestic labour", he said.

International Youth Welfare was set up to protect the interests of overseas students in Britain and has more than fifty affiliated organizations.



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BRITISH GAS

WEST EUROPE

Pay rise for French on eve of strike day

From Ian Murray

Paris, Nov 30

The powerful left-wing trade unions are calling out their members tomorrow for the second national strike this year, in protest against the "austerity" policies of M Barre, the Prime Minister.

While union leaders were finalizing their plans, the Cabinet met to agree measures to help pensioners, the lower paid and the civil service, and to prepare the way for a programme which will ensure that everyone can have a holiday.

The strike was called four weeks ago by the Communists, the CGT, the Socialist CDTI and the militant teachers' union, FEN, after M Barre introduced a series of measures which the unions claimed were inadequate, to hold down prices. The CGT and CDTI leaders have been meeting regularly since the previous national strike on May 24 to consider continuing the protest.

The May strike brought out an estimated 10 million workers and caused widespread stoppages in public services and heavy industry, where the left-wing unions are best organized. Tomorrow's strike, unlike the one in May, does not have the support of the moderate Force Ouvrière, so it is unlikely to be as widely observed.

Nevertheless, postal services are likely to be disrupted and consumers have been warned that there will be a 30 per cent reduction in electric power and that gas pressures will be reduced. Primary schools will be open, but with fewer lessons and secondary school courses will be badly affected.

The Paris transport authority expects to be able to run a 60 per cent service, except when there are power cuts. Air France expects only slight alterations to timetables, but the railways are likely to be forced to run only 40 per cent of their services.

The stock market is unlikely to function normally. Newspapers will not appear and the press agencies closed at noon. The Radiodiffusion-Télévision française and the Odéon have had to cancel vision programmes may have to be altered.

Mr Barre said in a newspaper interview yesterday that the strike was organized by unions "which have always sought to politicize problems". Nevertheless, he felt that this year France had had a very quiet year in political relations.

President Giscard d'Estaing appears on television this evening to explain the latest round of social measures.

The one affecting most people is the agreed increase in the level of the basic wage which, with effect from tomorrow, is increased to 10.05 francs an hour or 1,742 francs (£200) a month. This represents an increase of about £5.25 a month over the present rate, which was last raised at the beginning of October.

These increases, which are linked to the cost of living index, have more than compensated for inflation over the past year. The basic minimum wage has gone up by 12.4 per cent over the past year compared with a 9.5 per cent increase in the index, giving a 2.6 per cent increase in buying power.

Another important social measure is the increase in the aid to the pensioner to 11,000 francs (£1,264) a year. This represents a 10 per cent increase and means that pensions have more than doubled from the 5,200 francs level at the start of 1974. Nevertheless, 11,000 francs is still a pitifully low income.

Civil servants are also to benefit from today's measures. They will receive a pay increase of about 2.5 per cent, although this means that their purchasing power has scarcely risen at all over the year.

The measures to help people have holidays are aimed principally at the four million who say they cannot afford to take the break they need each year.



Preparing for space mission: Mme Anny-Chantal Levasseur-Regourd, a French candidate for the American Spacelab mission in 1980, preparing for tests at Farnborough yesterday on the centrifuge, a machine which simulates the enormous stresses on the human body during launching and reentry of spacecraft. Altogether five European scientists will be

offered to the Americans as astronauts on the project. At present the short-list has been reduced to 11 men and one woman, whose suitability is being evaluated in various countries. Psychological tests are being made in West Germany, clinical and physical evaluations in France and the Netherlands, and testing in simulated space conditions in Germany and Britain.

Kappler affair still casts shadow on Schmidt-Andreotti meeting

From Peter Nichols

Rome, Nov 30

Veron is once again cast for the scene of the meeting of Herr Schmidt, the West German Chancellor, and Signor Andreotti, the Italian Prime Minister, first planned for August and postponed as a result of the Kappler affair.

The two heads of government will have six hours of talks tomorrow at the Villa Maffei. The wounds left by the escape of the former SS colonel from a military hospital in Rome are still troublesome. The Italian press today ruefully reflects on West German descriptions of the new life of Herr Kappler and his wife (who arranged his escape) at Soltau where he is "protected like a minister".

Difficulties are said to have been placed in the way of interrogation by an examining judge on the grounds of health though, since his escape, Herr Kappler's health is said to have improved notably.

Frances Kappler has stated as much in a recent interview published by the Florence newspaper, *La Nazione*. Herr Kappler was in the Rome hospital because he was said to be dying of cancer.

The Milan *Corriere della Sera* says today that the tone of West German reports on the Kappler's new life is "almost provocative". They are said to be leaving the wife's flat and buying "a villa with park attached to the centre of Soltau". The money would be coming, it is ironically suggested, from the Red Cross.

The old ghosts are in fact dying hard. A Communist youth was stabbed to death in Bari on Monday night by right-wing extremists who apparently were shouting *Stig Heil*.

By another coincidence, the Turin newspaper *La Stampa* printed today some of the recent writings by Signor Carlo Andreotti, the newspaper editor who died yesterday after having been shot by left-wing terrorists.

One of the reprinted articles is entitled: *Achtung Germans!* and surveys the fears of swing in West Germany towards authoritarianism as a result of the kidnapping of Dr Hans-Martin Schleyer, the German industrialist, and the horror left at the effects of German terrorism.

British agents are, however, detected in this dark atmosphere which settled over popular feelings towards West Germany since the cancellation of the August meeting.

The Rome newspaper, *La Repubblica* finds indications of the need to revise their outlook on Europe and, in particular on individual partners who had been treated with too much leniency.

The West Germans are reported to be less drawn towards the illusion of being able to avoid the Conde's crisis by withdrawing into a censorious isolation. Isolation is now seen to make West Germany itself more vulnerable politically and likely to be left alone at moments of internal crisis.

One of the great mistakes is said now to be recognized is that of having made the 1974

Nine injured as police quell Spanish prison riot

From Our Correspondent

Madrid, Nov 30

A riot at a maximum security prison near Madrid resulted in the destruction of 95 per cent of the cells and indirectly led to the death of a policeman, it was learnt here today.

The trouble began at the Ocaña prison at about 3.30 pm yesterday. A number of prisoners transferred there for having taken part in riots in other prisons wrecked the furniture in their cells, set matches, and threw combustible material, shrapnel and broke out of their cells, according to an official of the Ministry of Justice.

About 150 prisoners held out against prison guards and police for three hours. Hundreds of riot police and a

detachment of the civil guard were called in to quell the riot, as firemen fought the fire. Some of the prisoners reached the roof of one of the prison buildings and threw tiles down on to the police. The police replied with rubber bullets and smoke bombs. Nine people were injured including three policemen.

As the commander of the civil guard detachment was driven to the scene in rain, his car skidded and crashed, killing the driver and injuring the commander and another officer.

Amid the debris banished were found reading "Copol" and names of organisations which cults for amnesty for common criminals as well as political prisoners. Copol, who died on March 14 after being hit by a rubber bullet, have now been closed.

Policeman goes free after Basque's death

From Our Correspondent

Madrid, Nov 30

Military authorities in Burgos have dropped the charges against a policeman to be dropped in connection with the killing of a Basque pro-amnesty demonstrator last year.

Señor Enrique Pascual, a member of the civil guard, had been charged with killing Señor Jesús Zabala, a worker. According to an official statement, Señor Zabala had taken refuge in a house together with other demonstrators. When the police entered the house, he was hit with a rifle and "was obliged" to open fire.

Inquiries into the death of another pro-amnesty demonstrator, who died on March 14 after being hit by a rubber bullet, have now been closed.

Hitler 'was willing to kill ex-mistress and son'

From Sue Maserman

Vienna, Nov 30

Hider was willing in 1940 to have his former mistress and his illegitimate son M Jean Loret, then aged 22, murdered if they posed a threat to his image. This is one conclusion reached by Professor Werner Maser, the historian and internationally recognized authority on Hitler.

Professor Maser today gave his first press conference here since the disclosure in the *Sunday Times* two months ago that he had discovered and authenticated a son of Hitler.

M Loret, whom Professor Maser is convinced is Hitler's son, was questioned by the German security police in occupied Paris in 1940 and asked whom his father was. He only knew that his father had been a German soldier stationed in France in the First World War.

He heard the truth from his mother, Charlotte Loret, after the Second World War. She took to drink under the strain of repeated security police and later Gestapo questioning, during which she denied knowing the identity of her son's father.

A review who was with her when she died inherited her sparse possessions, including her handbag. Only when he read the recent news about M Loret, now a twice married father of nine children, did he look closely at what was in the bag.

Professor Maser now has photographs of Hitler taken dur-

ing the First World War which he believes Hitler sent to his mistress. He still has to authenticate the back of the photograph is Hitler's, and until then is not willing to say what the text is.

Professor Maser says that M Loret contacted him of his own accord in February last year, and that he twice refused to continue talking to him before taking him seriously because he did not believe his claim.

Only when M Loret had answered 250 questions, whose answers could only be known by someone directly involved in the relationship with 100 per cent accuracy, did the professor realize he had found the man he was looking for.

Asked by a *Pravda* correspondent today whether the revelation that Hitler had a son would be an encouragement for neo-nazis, Professor Maser said he was convinced that the effect would be the opposite.

The fact that the great propagandist of racial purity had a son by a Frenchwoman, and left both her and the child destitute, is not likely to improve his image.

"Nor is the fact that he appears to have been prepared to have them killed if necessary. It also destroys the myth that after he was injured in 1917 he volunteered again immediately because he wanted to serve his country. He just wanted to get back to his French mistress."

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OVERSEAS

Syrian minister compares Sadat peace trip to Jerusalem with Pétain's surrender to Hitler

From Edward Mortimer
Damascus, Nov 30

President Sadat was today compared to Marshal Pétain, head of the Vichy regime in Nazi-occupied France, by Mr Ahmed Iskander, the Syrian information Minister.

Mr Iskander, a close associate of President Assad of Syria, claimed in an interview with The Times that Pétain had used the same words to justify his meeting Hitler on occupied French soil and signing a treaty with him as Mr Sadat has used to justify his visit to Israel.

He recalled that General de Gaulle had denounced Pétain's meeting with Hitler as an insult to the French nation, and de Gaulle has remained the nation's hero until now, while Pétain is the eyes of all French people is a traitor.

It may be argued that Mr Sadat did not accept Israeli occupation, but went to Jerusalem to secure Israel's withdrawal. Mr Iskander did not agree. First, he said Mr Sadat had "accepted ending the state of war before withdrawal", and secondly he had "admitted that Jerusalem is the capital of Israel; he was the first president in the world who admitted that".

"Negotiations", Mr Iskander explained, "must be held among equal parties. The visit of President Sadat has changed the balance of power in favour of Israel, and the Israeli Government will now demand from

us the same as President Sadat did. In other words, Sadat and Begin want the other Arabs to come to Geneva to accept what President Sadat accepted before."

"This means that the pressure of the United States, is still being exerted on the Israeli Government to withdraw from the occupied territories, with be exercised against the other Arabs to done round this Israeli attitude."

It is in order to "confront the danger", that President Sadat was planning to go to Tripoli tomorrow for the summit conference of hard line Arab powers called by Colonel Gaddafi. But it was clear that he did not intend to be stampeded into a "rejectionist" line. In his press conference on Monday he emphasized that the object of the Tripoli summit was "not to isolate one person or one regime"; that Mr Sadat was still in his eyes "President of the Arab Republic of Egypt and that it was wrong to speak of a "divorce" between Egypt and Syria. There were "simply differences of viewpoint between us about the methods of achieving peace", he said.

One of the main talking-points in political circles in Damascus during the past few days has been whether Iraq would agree to drop its campaign against the Syrian regime and accept the Tripoli summit.

Mr Yassir Arafat, leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization, has agreed to come to the meeting of Arab countries opposed to Mr Sadat's contacts with Israel. He will be held here Monday. Mr Arafat announced here today. Reuter and Agence France-Presse.

Plea to end irresponsible reporting of terrorism

From Our Own Correspondent
Washington, Nov 30

In an ambitious move designed to prevent "irresponsible" journalists from endangering the lives of the police and victims during kidnappings and terrorist attacks, the Washington police want to work out a mutually acceptable code of practice for the news media in the capital.

Mr Maurice Cullinane, chief of the District of Columbia police force, called a press conference here this week to make his views public. Predictably, in a country where "publish and be damned" ethics of journalism tend to prevail, less than 20 journalists from a total Washington press corps of several hundred were sufficiently interested to attend.

Since Russia has rejected President Sadat's invitation and only Israel, the United States and the Arab countries have accepted it, this conference seems unlikely to be met.

Cairo Correspondent writes: Jordan and Lebanon have informed Egypt that they would be willing to attend the preparatory Middle East peace conference in Cairo next week, provided that the press conference here is not held on Monday.

It may have been a mistake, since Mr Cullinane made it clear that if the news media refused to cooperate they would have a strict code of conduct imposed upon them. He was unable to explain, however, how this could be enforced on a press whose basic freedoms are enshrined in the constitution.

Mr Cullinane, organ of the ruling Baath Party, called today for the formation of an Rejectionist Front of Arab countries and Palestinian groups opposed to Mr Sadat's solo peace initiative.

Damascus: A summit meeting of Arab countries opposed to Mr Sadat's contacts with Israel will be held here Monday.

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OVERSEAS

Abortion debate holds up pay for 240,000 US government staff

From David Green

Washington, Nov 30

The 240,000 employees of the Department of Labour and the Department of Education and Welfare are waiting anxiously for a solution to a long struggle in Congress which could block their pay from midnight tonight.

Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives have been arguing for several months over the delicate issue of federally-funded abortions for women with low incomes.

The dispute is holding up final approval of a \$60,000m (about £33,400m) tax appropriations Bill for the two departments. This should have been "cleared" by the end of September, but the deadline has been extended twice to keep pay cheques flowing. There is now strong resistance to yet another delay.

Numerous attempts have been made to find a compromise line on abortion adopted by the House and the only slightly more liberal posture of the Senate.

With the combined backing of President Carter and the Supreme Court, who feel that the Federal Government should not be obliged to finance abortions for the poor, the House wants to limit help to those women whose life would be endangered by giving birth and to victims of rape and incest under certain strict conditions.

The Senate would also like to extend federal funds to cases where pregnancy would cause "severe and long-lasting physical health damage". It also advocates less restrictive conditions for rape and incest.

When both Houses of Congress met for the second time this month yesterday to try to resolve their differences, anti-abortion members of the House of Representatives were once again adamant in their refusal to accept any compromise along the lines by the Senate.

Mr Bhutto's discredited security force disbanded

From Our Correspondent

Islamabad, Nov 30

The martial law authorities today disbanded the federal security force created by Mr Bhutto, the former Prime Minister, in 1973. An Interior Ministry statement said the force had been used by Mr Bhutto as an instrument of oppression and political intimidation.

Although the federal security force was in theory under the administrative control of the Interior Ministry, it was known to have been used by Mr Bhutto and his aides to destroy political opposition.

General Zia, the chief martial law administrator, first ordered an inquiry into the federal

security force last July. An investigative committee found that the force, set up to assist the civil administration and the police for maintaining law and order in cases of large-scale unlawful breaking of law and order, had been used contrary to its prescribed charter or duties as an instrument of oppression and political intimidation.

The committee further found that the image of the force had been irretrievably tarnished and therefore recommended its disbandment.

Most of the 25,000 members will be absorbed into other forces such as the police, but those with criminal convictions will be discharged.

Third World Report

Critical North-South balancing act

If the Third World's

problems are to be solved, everyone

must make an effort, Herr Willy Brandt, the former West German Chancellor and chairman of the Social Democratic Party, in a statement. Unless the imbalance between North and South was corrected, "we shall go to the devil", he declared.

Herr Brandt announced on

Tuesday the 16 members of an

independent commission, of

which he is chairman, set up

to find ways to close the North-South gap. Extracts from his

statement, the text of which

was provided by the Labour &

Trades Union Press Service.

follows.

The struggle for greater equality of opportunity for the weak has never been, or at all events has long since ceased to be, a task or policy to be pursued by nations in isolation. Personally, I am convinced that development policy has already assumed the proportions of a world-wide social question and that it will remain such for the remainder of this century.

Perhaps we Social Democrats can have a special part to play. Our strategy of getting a peace dividend off the products in one region, where we have taught something of how coexistence, harmony, divergent economic orders, and even political systems can be fact.

My first point is an element in the maintenance of peace, a third pillar to complement the current attempts to harmonize better the conflicting interests of East and West, and the efforts being made to achieve a balanced reduction of troops and weaponry in Europe and to limit the strategic arms of the two alliances.

The matters on which the North and the South are at issue call for policies of harmonization and peace on a global scale, whose immediate goal must be to prevent a trial of strength and the senseless confrontation that would invite, while permitting possible exacerbations that would yet fall short of a catastrophe; and whose guiding method would be that this prevention shall not require any state whether of North or South the abandonment of principles and convictions by which it plots its own course...

In pursuing world economic relations on a new footing, it is now necessary, down at the drawing board and thinking up a uniform, hybrid, global sys-



Australia refuses to send back refugees

From Our Correspondent

Melbourne, Nov 30

Mr Andrew Peacock, the Australian Foreign Minister, today rejected the Vietnamese Government's demand for the return of 182 people on board the hijacked trawler, long Ben 1 which arrived in Darwin yesterday. He said that genuine refugees would not be turned away.

The principal argument in favour of continuing to finance abortions is, of course, that poor women will otherwise be forced to seek abortions in back alleys or be children that they can ill afford to keep. As an alternative, President Carter has promised more federal money for birth control, but this has not yet materialized.

Most of the 151 refugees and 21 crew members have been allowed ashore a senior official of the Vietnamese Embassy in Canberra went to the Department of Foreign Affairs to demand the return of the trawler and all those on board.

This is the first time the Australian Government has been involved in a diplomatic tug-of-war over South-East Asian refugees, several hundred of whom have arrived here during the last few weeks. Mr Peacock said today that those who wished to return to Vietnam would be permitted to do so.

As spokesman for the Vietnamese Embassy described the seizure of the vessel as "an act of piracy". Foreign affairs officials were today trying to play down suggestions that a diplomatic incident could develop over the hijacked vessel.

Mr Peacock has invited the Vietnamese Embassy's charge de mission on Friday to discuss the matter.

in such a way as to make Europe, over and above party frontiers, come increasingly to align itself in solidarity with the Third World.

This means that in the dialogue between the rich and the poor the Community will have to develop its present progressive stance, by which the situation of the developing countries is being improved, and that existing attempts by individual member countries of the Community to cooperate on development policy must be considerably intensified.

No one has a patent recipe

for solving the problems facing North and South. There is general agreement among all that involved that the current international negotiations have not been a tremendous success, albeit there are definite signs of growing mutual understanding. This understanding has to be deepened.

To further this end, some

have wondered whether, as a

useful addition to the current

international negotiations,

an independent commission

should be created which, above

and beyond the negotiations,

could come forward with pro-

posals for policies readable

in the medium-term. After much

thought and many, many

conversations, I am now convinced that

a commission of this kind can

actually be of some assistance

not only in matters of sub-

stance but also from the

"atmospheric" point of view

and I have, therefore, decided

to accept the chairmanship

that has been offered me.

It cannot be the task of such

a body to act as a mediator

between states, thereby reliev-

ing governments of their

responsibilities. The job the

commission has set itself for

is this: to follow up the large

and varied number of broadly-

based and adequately funded

studies at present underway on

a variety of particular prob-

lems, with a concentrated pack-

age of realistic suggestions

spelling out in some detail

how, existing circumstances

taken into account, one can set

about tackling as quickly and

as effectively as possible, some

of the most serious problems

arising from the contradictions

between North and South,

between poor and rich.

We want, in addition, to

work towards an atmosphere in

which discussion can be

business-like, emotionally re-

laxed and, somewhat less

ideological than hitherto.

'Patriotic Front must approve internal settlement'

Black rule may not end Rhodesian war, Zambian leader says

From a Correspondent

Lusaka, Nov 30

President Kaunda of Zambia says he would be prepared to support an internal settlement in Rhodesia if it met with the approval of the Patriotic Front and the African "front line" states.

In an interview Dr Kaunda added, however, that Zambia would support a guerrilla war against any black government in Rhodesia opposed by the Patriotic Front nationalists.

He had reason to believe that this was a genuine black government, we would not continue the war", he said.

Dr Kaunda said, however, that he saw the possibility of an internal settlement as very remote.

For more than a month, Dr Kaunda has been publicly insisting that pre-independence elections, as specified by the Anglo-American proposals would result in a bloody civil war. Now, after great pressure from the other "front line" states, he is apparently willing to leave the door open to the possibility of such elections. But he still derides the concept.

"To bring out a true democratic settlement not involving the society, it should be recognized", he said.

Zambia is one of the five "front line" states surrounding Rhodesia (the others are Tanzania, Botswana, Mozambique and Angola), and is used as a base by guerrillas of Mr Joshua Nkomo's Zulu wing of the Patriotic Front.

Mr Nkomo, joint leader of the front with Mr Robert Mugabe, has rejected the plan of Mr Smith, the Rhodesian

Prime Minister, for an internal settlement not involving the society. It should be recognized, he said, that the Patriotic Front armed forces are led by a political unit and that political unit should be given an equal chance.

Earlier this week Mr Nkomo said he would not join a coalition with any of the nationalists now inside Rhodesia, but Dr Kaunda calls this "a public stand".

Despite the obituaries for the Anglo-American proposals being written by many of the participants, the Zambian leader believes that the front could form the basis for a final settlement, if the British are prepared to compromise.

A letter he had sent to the British Government last week contained an assurance that Zambia was not working against the proposals. But the future of the package was in the hands of the West.

"If we are not careful", he said, "even this one will go into the limbo where all other initiatives have gone."

Zambia would continue fighting for change in Rhodesia, even if Western opinion turned against the Patriotic Front.

Mr Nkomo, who had been allowed ashore a senior official of the Vietnamese Embassy in Canberra went to the Department of Foreign Affairs to demand the return of the trawler and all those on board.

He will know that the majority of guerrillas are only fighting for universal adult suffrage, the letter continued. "Indeed, we have publicly demanded that a 'safe return' be included as part of the mooted negotiations.

"We have demanded a climate conducive to negotiations. We have demanded a stay of all executions of political prisoners. We have demanded that these guerrillas fighting for universal adult suffrage may soon be able to come back home."

An explanation regarding the

reasons behind the massacre was called for.

The bishop asked for an early response to his letter.

Sources close to the bishop said unless he received a satisfactory reply from Mr Smith he might withdraw from the planned conference.

A spokesman from the Prime Minister's office said Mr Smith had received the bishop's letter. He would be replying but did not wish to make the contents public.

Meanwhile, in a calculated display of lack of racism within the security forces a thousand black and white troops marched through the streets of Bulawayo today.

Police Telex referred to Biko injury

From Marcel Berlins

Pretoria, Nov 30

A Telex message sent by the head of the security police in Port Elizabeth stated that an injury had been "inflicted" on Steve Biko, and gave a precise time, 7 am on September 7.

The Telex, quoted in evidence on the thirteenth day of the inquest into the Black Consciousness leader, was sent by Colonel Pieter Goosen to security headquarters in Pretoria.

Dated September 16, it also

described Biko as "being in a semi-coma" on September 11, before being taken more than 700 miles in a Land Rover to the Pretoria prison hospital, where he died the following day.

The court has no unfinished

hearing about the evidence. It only remains for the four main counsel involved,

representing Biko's family, the police, the prison doctors and the state, to make their final statements.

Colonel Goosen, who had given evidence during the first week of the inquest, was recalled to be cross-examined about the Telex, which he had not mentioned at all in his main evidence. He said that he had thought they had been sustained, said that he could throw no light on the subject.

He noticed the following evening, September 7, that Biko's lip was swollen and was told that he had been brought under control after having attacked security policemen during the day.

Warrant Officer A. Fouche, one of the squad guarding Biko on the night of September 6-7, when he was first admitted, said that the injuries were sustained, said that he could throw no light on the subject.

He noticed the following evening, September 7, that Biko's lip was swollen and was told that he had been brought under control after having attacked security policemen during the day.

Warrant Officer Fouche was asked about the journey in the Land Rover, on which he accompanied Biko. He said that Biko was unduly ill. He did not think he was in semi-coma.

been injured during a scuffle with his interrogators in Port Elizabeth.

Mr Sydney Kentridge, counsel for Biko's family, pointed out that, while the Telex had described Biko as being in a semi-coma, Colonel Goosen had not admitted that fact either in his affidavit or in evidence.

PARLIAMENT, November 30, 1977

Government hoping to extend fire precautions law to more buildings

House of Lords

Huts had been forced to close and accommodation had to be found of buildings under the Fire Precautions Act, 1971, Lady Vickers (C) said.

She was initiating a debate on the question of fire precautions in small hotels and old people's homes.

Lady Vickers said the cost of implementing the regulations had been phenomenal. There had been little financial support, despite the grants made. Many small hoteliers had been unable to improve the amenities in their hotels while carrying out the increased fire precaution measures required.

Viscount Long (C) said he understood there were 37,000 small hotels and guest houses throughout the United Kingdom. About 12 per cent had applied for a certificate under the 1971 Act. Of these, 72 per cent had been inspected and only 40 per cent had been issued with a certificate.

Things were not moving quickly, and even more strenuous was the action 16 per cent had reduced their accommodation to avoid the Act's provisions, a loss to tourists and British holiday-makers alike.

I believe (she said) it will take some time yet to implement the legislation. I am sure I would like to see it modified and made easier. If we can do that then I am sure

this legislation could be carried out more quickly by fire protection officers and others.

Lord Amhurst (L) said frail, feeble and confused old people woken by fire at night often could not cope with a fire door opening at the top of the staircase. The right open fire escape could fall into the stairs and be killed for more easily than by the fire. Fire protection officers should bear this in mind and not treat old people's homes in the same way as small hotels or children's homes where there were younger, more active people.

I would (he said) like to see that it might not be possible to have fire escape lessons given both to the fire and the inhabitants of those places. If more people knew what to do and where the fire doors were that might provide some protection with simpler and not quite so elaborate fire doors.

Lord Gifford (Glasgow) said the fire regulations might seem harsh and severe but they were practical and London in particular should be grateful for them. The rules were designed to have fire doors open to 1500 mm. Sir Edward Shorter (Wales) and other builders were determined there should never be a great fire again.

They were one of the things that saved London from greater destruction in 1940. Areas hit by fire were contained and there were none of the firestorms which occurred in Germany's bombed cities such as Hamburg. The debate was concluded.

Whereabouts of businessman still unknown

The Government had taken all possible steps, without success, to determine the whereabouts of Mr Robert Scammon, the businessman who disappeared in Uganda. Lord Goronwy-Roberts, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, said:

It is not only disturbing but also deplorable that there are no means in present circumstances of finding where Mr Scammon is. We are doing all we can to find out and are following up every possible lead.

Recalling that Mr Scammon renounced his British citizenship and took Ugandan citizenship in 1973, Sir Edward Shorter said it was for the British Government to help Mr Scammon's family to ascertain where he was.

Lord Goronwy-Roberts added: I know of no country in Africa or elsewhere who does not join with us in wholehearted condemnation of these barbaric acts in Uganda. (Cheers.)

Trade deal with China may be signed in new year

It is believed that a deal could be achieved between the EEC and the People's Republic of China this would be an important step in the developing relationship between China and western Europe, including the United Kingdom.

Brussels, within the Community, hoped to be in the forefront of China's partners in this development. The EEC should seek to strengthen the existing basis for economic cooperation to their mutual advantage.

The Government welcomed the proposed trade agreement between the EEC and China which they hoped would be signed in the new year.

They were prepared to look at a proposal for the establishment of a permanent Committee of Delegates of the EEC and China which would have a joint committee for economic cooperation credit terms, or other financing credit terms, or other financing

It is to be hoped (she said) there will be an increase in exports from the United Kingdom with beneficial trade exchanges for both countries.

Lord Goronwy-Roberts, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, said China's need

The debate was concluded.

MP wants Duke charged with treason

A Labour MP said that the Duke of Monmouth, the claimant to the throne and dispossessor of his 9,000 acres of land. In the exchanges, Mr Dennis Canavan (West Riding, Lab) asked the Lord Advocate what he had been doing recently.

It is possible to charge him with treason and to dispossess him of his 9,000 acres of land in my constituency?

Mr King-Murray—I was not sure what the Duke of Monmouth would refer to the Marquis who was excommunicated for treason in 1650.

The Duke of Monmouth is subject to restriction on entry to the United Kingdom by the Southern Rhodesia Order, 1972. In his absence from Scotland any question of his right to be here for which he may be liable does not arise.

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NEW BOOKS

In terms of his own best verse

The English Auden
Poems, Essays & Dramatic
Writings, 1927-1939, by W. H.
Auden
Edited by Edward Mendelson
Faber, £3.95

W. H. Auden became a poet at half past three one afternoon in March, 1923. (The place was a ploughed field and you will find the occasion commemorated in the 39th stanza of Part IV of his *Letter to Lord Byron*.) When he was 20, and at Oxford, he wrote a selection of his poems in T. S. Eliot. Eliot rejected them, but said politely, "I should be interested to follow your work." As it happened, a week or two before he had this encouragement from Eliot, Auden had written the first of the poems with which he would become famous. These were the poems first published by Stephen Spender in 1928, and then (with additions and corrections) as the book *Poems* (Faber, 1930). After this, there followed *The Orators* (1932), and *Look, Stranger!* (1935)—although the latter title was invented by Edward Mendelson, and Auden based it. With the addition of songs from plays, and unprinted bits and pieces from notebooks, running through to the end of the decade, and taking in the trips to Iceland with Louis MacNeice and to China with Christopher Isherwood, this is the version covered by Edward Mendelson's edition of the early work as *The English Auden*. The book is well named. It ends, of course, with Auden in America at the outbreak of the Second World War, showing an affirming flame in one of his dives in *Fifty-Second Street*.

The English Auden is an attractive and an illuminating book. It is also, for any reader of a general nature these poems as they came out quite a startling one. Auden in his final postures was such a Prospero, such an authoritative old windbag, that it comes as a welcome shock to see him isolated in this way as no Prospero at all, but rather some sort of Ariel. The early poems are magical, neurotic, inspired, obscure. They still give off an authentic sense of some never-stated personal crisis and here I find Mr. Mendelson's attempts to date them individually of the greatest possible interest. No doubt a biography will one day tell us why Auden was wounded into clipped, cryptic, and most memorable verse circa 1927-30.

Robert Nye

The system Italian style

The Net and the Quest: Patterns of Community and How They Can Survive Progress
By Ralph Gasser
(Maurice Temple Smith, £8.50)

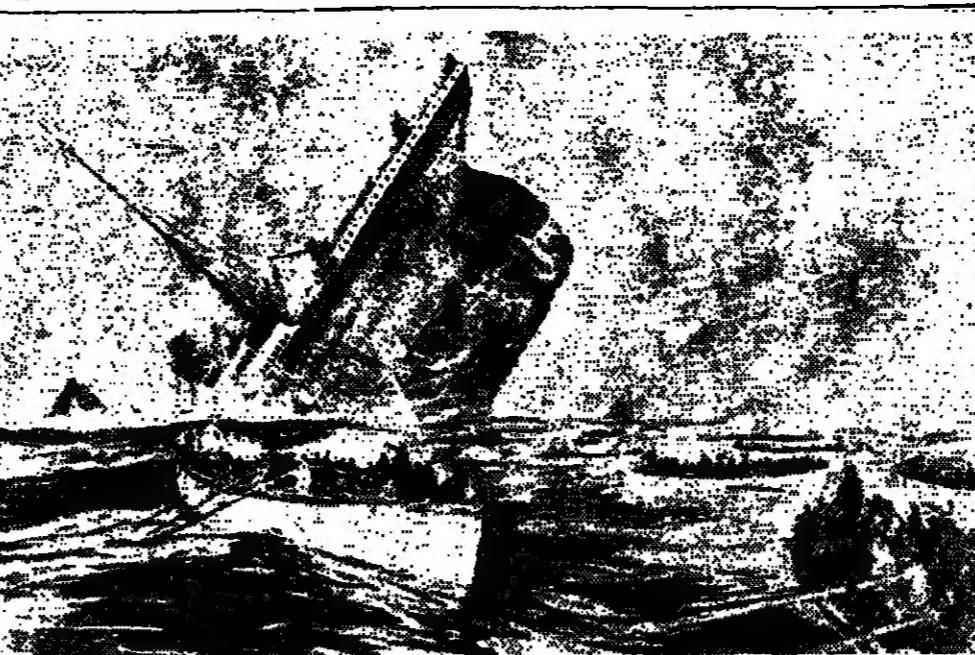
It is possible to guess, vulgarly, that the poems derived at least in part from his realization of his own homosexuality, and his wish at one end the same time to conceal this and to reveal it. The ruined heroes, the spies, the frontiers, the barriers, the general air of doom and chagrin, all play their part in a poetic enterprise of queer self-dramatization. But what is unique is the rhythms, and the way those rhythms seem to be in full possession of some secret which they must never make clear to the reader. I do not think that anything as simple as sexual guilt could quite explain this. Anyhow, the young Auden was definitely a poet, with all the true poet's feeling for words, natural resources of technique, and willingness to discover what he has to say even in the process of saying it.

This last quality, in particular, seems to me what distinguishes the English Auden from his later American self. The writer of lines like these is a poet prepared to share his sense of discovery with the reader: *The sprinkler on the lawn / Wounds in vertigo, and / Stamps are drawn*, and *The last boy vanishes, / A blazer julien, through the rigid trees.*

That was the first poem in the privately printed 1928 pamphlet. It did not survive into the 1930 book. Of others that did not it is interesting and instructive to see how Auden reworked phrases and images. Always the impression is of a poet using material that has been "given" to him, that is inspired, and which he perceives it to be his task to make sense of.

In my opinion, *The English Auden* goes a long way towards re-establishing Auden in terms of his own best verse, the verse that he wrote when he was possibly still in a stage of being wounded into an authority, rather than being an authority, in order to hold truth as rhyme's length. There is nothing startling in the unpublished work, incidentally, which only goes to show that Auden had a keen sense of his own best. Once again I am struck by the colossal debt to Laura Riding. There are whole poems which could be straight out of any of her volumes of the late 1920s. Auden admitted to this influence, I believe, but has any critic followed it up seriously?

Robert Nye



Down and down. The "Titanic" sank two years after Edward VII's death. Yet it remains the perfect symbol of the permanent eclipse of the palmy days Britain knew under his ten years of kingship. The Illustrated London News Social History of Edwardian Britain, by James Bishop, with a foreword by Sir Charles Petrie (Angus and Robertson, £4.80) briefly chronicles the decade when we were a Land of Hope and Glory, and puts it visually before us in an array of those photographs and engravings the paper has long been famous for.

Sailing perfectionist

Peter Jay

The Atlantic Challenge
The Story of Trintiman FT
By David Palmer
(Hollis & Carter, £4.95)

The Atlantic Challenge is the story of David Palmer's four-year campaign to win the Jester Class of the 1976 Observer single-handed transatlantic race (Ostar). He did not quite win—but he and the 35-foot trimaran "FT" which his paper financed for him, achieved more than enough (including the Crystal Trophy two years running) to the 1975 Round Britain Race, second in the 1975 Round Britain race, first British boat home and third in the Jester class in the 1976 Ostar. He did not quite win—but he and the 35-foot trimaran "FT" which his paper financed for him, achieved more than enough (including the Crystal Trophy two years running) to the 1975 Round Britain Race, second

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THEATRES

YOUNG VIC STUDIO, 100 St. Martin's Lane, WC2. TUE-FRI 7.30pm, SAT 2.30pm. *THE AWESOME WORDS OF TRINITY*. Wally Funky. D. Tel. (01) 580 8000. TALK ON THE TOWN. 7.30pm. From 11 Dec. Entry/price £3.00. *RAZZLE DAZZLE*. ROGER WHITMORE. FEST. WEDNESDAY. JULIE ANTHONY.

CINEMAS

ABC 9.15pm. *THE STING*. 8.30pm. *ALL SEATS BKA*. 1. GOLDEN RENDEZVOUS (A1). WED-FRI 7.30pm. *THE STING* 8.15pm. 2. *THE STING* 8.15pm. 3. *ACADEMY ONE* 8.30pm. 4. *JAMES JONES: A PORTRAIT OF THE PREDATOR* 8.30pm. 5. *THE STING* 8.45pm. 6. *ACADEMY TWO* 8.30pm. 7. *CLAUDE FRANCOIS* 8.30pm. 8. *THE STING* 8.45pm. 9. *ACADEMY THREE* 8.30pm. 10. *THE GOY* (A1). 11. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 12. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 13. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 14. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 15. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 16. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 17. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 18. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 19. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 20. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 21. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 22. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 23. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 24. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 25. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 26. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 27. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 28. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 29. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 30. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 31. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 32. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 33. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 34. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 35. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 36. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 37. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 38. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 39. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 40. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 41. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 42. *THE GOY* 8.45pm. 43. *THE 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SPORT

Racing

Limited chances for the established

By Michael Seely

Frost and fog robbed Haydock Park racegoers of the chance of seeing the 1976 Cheltenham Gold Cup winner, Royal Frolic, in action yesterday. It may also have deprived his trainer, Fred of the opportunity of giving Sir John Haughey's eight-year-old a deservedly needed preliminary before his start in the King George VI Steeplechase at Kempton Park on Boxing Day.

Royal's wife, Mercy, said: "It's no suitable race for Royal Frolic between now and Christmas. The timing of the Masser-Ferguson Gold Cup — at Cheltenham on Saturday week — is all right, but at this stage of his career, Fred is unlikely to have the horses in the form he wants.

It's a scandal that races for three-mile chasers are not more evenly spaced out."

Mrs Rimell has a point. Within nine days at the end of October and the beginning of November, there were three such events at Wincanton, and the last two were won by Border Incident, Casamayor and Midnight Court respectively. The last pair are both improving young horses and have gone on to win the top-class amateur marks in the weeks. However, for horses with established reputations opportunities are limited.

The top class three miles are the attractions of the winter game.

Millions of people who would have difficulty in remembering what won last year's Derby, will never forget Arctic and Mill House. And similarly Red Rum is a household name for those who have never seen him race.

Pat Fifth, the cleric of the course at Haydock which staged yesterday's abandoned Edward Hammars Memorial Steeplechase, said: "The trouble with these races is that they are expensive to present and that they tend to cut up badly." But day after day the public are forced to watch three-mile handicaps which are as poorly contested. They look open on paper but there are seldom more than a couple of runners which could win unless they started overnight. Clerks of the course may find the gamble of putting on well-fenced condition races for the three-mile horses well worth the risk.

There is an inspection at Haydock at 7.30 this morning, but the chance of racing taking place. On the course at 14.5 yesterday afternoon the horses had been unable to break through the fog and the ground was still frozen.

If a miracle occurs and there has been a sudden overnight thaw, I would expect to see Mayhem beat Newgate in the Greenwood Steeplechase. Newgate has admirable courage when holding Carthon's persistent challenge at Newcastle to give the four-year-old his third victory in succession. Mayhem, however, was tackling

another talented newcomer when chasing home Netheron at Wetherby. He should be too quick for Newgate.

In the first division of the Weaverham Novices Hurdle at Nottingham winner Bonnegger may manage to give the weight to Peter Easterby. Within the Law will have a long and gentle gallop when chasing home High Wold at Wetherby and the Northern Free Handicap winner, Tudor Jig who has yet to race over hurdles.

Prospects of racing are brighter at Warwick and Wincanton where no problems are reported. At Warwick, King may come some consolation for his disappointment by capturing the Shipton Handicap Steeplechase with Allied Carpers and the Cheltenham Handicap Hurdle with Breeze Waggon.

Fulke Walwyn could also achieve a double by taking the Temple Novices Steeplechase with his entry in the Handicap Hurdle.

Diamond Edge, and the Richard Handicap Steeplechase at Wincanton with Menchell, who recorded a fast time when beating Skyray by 10 lengths at Newbury.

It is not surprising that Alverton is the pick of the handicap and that 4-1 each way remains outstanding value.

Most of the money in the London bookmakers' offices yesterday centred to be for Beacon Light

Handicap Hurdle at Sandown Park on Saturday. After heavy support from Joe's six-year-old is forecast at 3-1 with the bookmakers, Alverton was backed at 4-1 with Mecca and is now a 7-2 chance. The other two firms have extended his price to 4-1. Those close to Alverton are worried that Beacon Light may have a much flukish run when racing for Stamp's Joe's Gallant Warrior. But there is no doubt that Alverton is the pick of the handicap and that 4-1 each way remains outstanding value.

Most surprisingly Fort Devon was not the pick for the Gold Cup yesterday. Having been laid to lose £25,000 with Ladbrokes, Fulke Walwyn's 11-year-old is now joint favourite with Bannow Rambler at 7-1. Fort Devon, second to Bannow Rambler in the Hennessy Gold Cup, is also a good bet.

Wetherby's Tudor Jig is the best steeplechaser in England and Ireland unless Royal Frolic can recapture his best form.

It is a pity that Newgate was beaten by the fact that Bascot's Hall was also the subject of some quiet backing with William Hill, being supported from 33-1 to 25-1.

STATE OF GOING: (Official): Warwick, Good; Wincanton: Good; Haydock Park: 7.30 am; Inspection: Wincanton, Good; Market Rasen: Good.

Wincanton programme

12.45 CASTLE CARY HURDLE (E595: 2m)

3 61200000 Stable (D), Miss E. Morris, 8-1-17 M. Marshall 8

3 62021-10 Successor (D), H. Turner, 8-1-17 M. White 8

3 62021-10 Successor, 8-1-17 M. White 8

1.15 CERNE ABBAS STEEPELCHASE (Handicap: E573: 2m)

3 62021-10 Stable (D), Miss E. Morris, 8-1-17 M. Marshall 8

3 62021-10 Successor, 8-1-17 M. White 8

1.45 TOM CAXTON HURDLE (Handicap: E592: 2m)

3 62021-10 Stable (D), Miss E. Morris, 8-1-17 M. Marshall 8

3 62021-10 Successor, 8-1-17 M. White 8

Ronald Butt

Will the Lib-Lab pact give Mr Steel a social democratic future?

The Council of the Liberal Party has expressed its alarm at the way Mr Steel's Lib-Lab pact is working. It has decided to summon a special Liberal assembly if proportional representation is defeated in the Bill for European direct elections as a consequence of the failure of a substantial majority of Labour MPs to support it.

What is more, it was only by a narrow majority that the council defeated a motion to demand that the Lib-Lab pact be ended, or renegotiated here and now.

Despite this warning, it is unlikely that any number of Labour MPs that could reasonably be described as "substantial" will support the desired regional list system, even though Mr Callaghan himself will personally reflect in the direction of his pact with Mr Steel by doing so. The system likely to be adopted is first-past-the-post.

As such this will not be a resigning matter for Mr Steel. Nor will it make him renounce his pact. Indeed, the only thing that might impel him to resign would be if his party in its assembly then voted to end the pact which is now thelynchpin of his policy, and his parliamentary colleagues endorsed this decision. Mr Steel's determination to keep his party firmly locked into its present social democratic role is paramount.

Before looking at the implications of this, it is worth itemising the precise nature of the complaints about the pact since these are so substantial as to illustrate just how remarkable Mr Steel's determination to stick to it, against every obstacle.

First, no piece of major policy-making (not even the Government's policy on small businesses) can genuinely be ascribed to Liberal influence. Most important, the Liberals have not got what they wanted on either devolution or proportional representation to Europe, and have had to stomach it.

Secondly, the moderation of the Labour Government is palpable, the consequence of the lack of a Labour majority rather than the influence of the Liberals. In practice the role of the Liberals as Labour sees it, is simply to keep the Government in office with the hope of winning an absolute majority for much less moderate policies after the next election, after



which the Liberals can be dismissed.

Finally, the Liberals have to face the fact that, for all these reasons, they now appear to very many of their former voters as not, after all, a genuine third force, but rather as an outcrop of Labour's social democratic wing.

In such a predicament, the Liberals may well seek to force Mr Steel to break the pact. In some ways, it would be tactically convenient moment to do so. With the Scottish Nationalists still sustaining the Government over devolution, there would be an argument, general support, that Liberal "support" was withdrawn and, in theory at least, the Liberals might have an interval in which to re-establish themselves as an independent party, and one with policies other than the Lib-Lab pact.

But Mr Steel will defend the pact to the death, and a new Liberal leader will not be easy to find with three ex-leaders still on the Liberal bench. I suppose it is possible that Mr Grimond, who wrote a scathing critical attack on the Lib-Lab pact in the Daily Mail, this year, and implicitly (in a Mark Anthony sort of way) attacked Mr Steel's leadership as well, might be drafted.

But the odds are still that Mr Steel will be able to carry on with the pact, until the next election which he and the

Liberals would fight "independently", but on the sort of terms which would enable the pact to be renewed afterwards if the Tories failed to win an overall majority.

What is significant is that Mr Steel is leading the Liberals towards what looks like a semi-permanent arrangement with Labour which has an uncanny resemblance to the role the German Liberals (the FDP) have in keeping power the German Socialists (SPD)—the only difference being that the German socialists are more left-wing than the British.

Of course, there are differences. The FDP has, for instance, a record of participation in post-war German governments which it has enjoyed as a result of an electoral system that normally gives it over 30 seats. This governmental experience gives the FDP an aura of "real" politics, the British Liberals lack.

Nevertheless, when the FDP has failed to do with all its opportunities and advantages is highly instructive.

The FDP has an old, though precarious history going back to the days of Imperial Germany. Then, however, and also during the subsequent Weimar period, the German Liberals were haunted by disunity. Since the war, the FDP has claimed to represent a third force between the two major parties that predominate in

German politics—the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU) who are more or less conservative, and the Social Democrats (SPD) who are more or less Labour.

Yet it has been in practice almost impossible for the FDP to establish itself as a truly independent third force. With both the CDU/CSU and SPD accepting Germany as a social market economy—that is, a capitalist society tempered by various modifications of collectivism—the difference between the two major parties has become in many ways a matter of emphasis. What then is the role of an intermediate third group to be?

Even in the early post-war years, the FDP could never obtain the support of more than an average of 10 per cent of the German electorate despite the special advantages it obtained from the electoral system and from its appeal to those (mainly middle class) Germans who, while rejecting socialism, were reluctant to accept the CDU/CSU because of its confessionality.

At first, the FDP were, quite naturally, the allies of Aduoden's Christian Democrats in government against an SPD with some Marxist tendencies: after all, both were "bourgeois" parties.

But two damaging defects for the FDP in the fifties changed that. In 1959, the German Socialists rejected the idea of

seeking to impose total socialism (even by evolution) in favour of a non-socialist liberal-social democracy. When, therefore, the CDU/CSU became the largest single party in 1969, but without an overall majority, it became open to the German Liberals to decide which of the two big parties should form the government.

They put the Social Democrats in power by coalition with them, not only because the SPD had gone responsible but because the FDP itself had become another more left-wing during the brief period when it was the only opposition party during the grand (CDU/SPD) coalition in the sixties. Its more "conservative" (if you like, Aquitaine) elements had been subordinated to its "social democratic" impulses, and the FDP had become a natural ally for the Social Democrats.

Since 1969, the German Liberals have kept the Social Democrats in power. Even though the CDU has been the largest single party in two elections out of the last three, it has been kept out of office—in 1976, by fewer than 10 per cent of the votes.

The moral seems to be that the rise of a political party depends not on the electoral system but on whether it really has something to say that a sufficiently large section of the electorate want to hear.

But there is another lesson to be learned from Germany as well. Despite proportionate representation, the Liberals have not become a genuinely independent force; yet under our own much maligned system, the Labour Party replaced the old Liberals and the Scottish Nationalists have become a genuine challenge.

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A MESSAGE HALF HEARD

There has never been any shortage of prophets and preachers asserting that mankind is moving in the wrong direction, that the pursuit of wealth does not necessarily bring happiness, that a reawakening of moral and spiritual perception is necessary if disaster is to be avoided. From time to time one of these prophets evokes a response which tells as much about the time in which he lives as about the message he brings. Dr Fritz Schumacher, for whom a memorial service was held yesterday in Westminster Cathedral, was such a one. What he preached, as he himself said, derived mainly from the traditional wisdom of mankind, which has always been respected and not ignored. He quoted the icon on the Mount, the teachings of Buddha, and the

teachings of R. H. Tawney, and that "unless industry is to be paralysed by recurrent revolts on the part of outraged human nature it must satisfy criteria which are not purely economic". But he managed to relate his message to very contemporary doubts and fears about the world today. He was a preacher with long experience in the world of economics and industry, and he brought to get the spiritual and the practical in a way that set up reverberations beyond his immediate circle of admirers.

To appreciate him as a significant contemporary figure does not necessarily mean agreeing with everything he said. To some extent he encapsulated wisdom that was becoming conventional anyway: to some extent he hoped for changes in society which at present lie beyond realism. Nevertheless, he contributed a great deal. He wrote his book *Small is Beautiful* at the moment when advanced industrial societies were entering a period of extreme self-doubt about their own viability and the validity as a model for developing countries. Hopes of overcoming poverty, crime, alienation and unemployment

through continuous economic growth have been disappointed. The fact that more people are living longer and more secure lives than at any time in history has come to seem less important than that the beneficiaries of industrial development seem less happy and fulfilled than they were expected to be while the majority of the world's population is excluded even from the benefits that are available. Work for many people is still degrading drudgery; leisure is not necessarily the most satisfying aim in life; above all, the scale of things—especially of industrial, political and bureaucratic structures—is felt to be overpowering the individual.

Dr Schumacher did not advocate smallness as the answer to everything. The title of his book has misled many people. What he was talking about was the appropriate size for different structures—some large, some small. He concentrated on smallness, he said, only to counteract the idolatry of giantism. Were there an idolatry of smallness he would have exerted his influence in the other direction. "The fundamental problem is to achieve smallness within large organizations", he wrote. People can be themselves only in small comprehensible groups. It was not, therefore, the abandonment of economic growth or the escape to the pastoral simplicity of the commune that he was advocating, but a spiritual "homecoming" that would bring a qualitative measure to bear on the idea of growth. Modern technology, he felt, was pursuing size and speed and violence in defiance of natural harmony.

His disapproval was fundamentally moral but it contributed to thinking in several very practical and important areas. His ideas on size have become part of the common currency of discussion on a range of issues from housing through industry to devolution and the European Community. His warnings that natural resources are limited and need to be conserved have almost dissolved into conventional wisdom. Above all, his

MR FRASER'S MISCALCULATED ELECTION

McFraser has not yet lost the federal election so confidently called five weeks ago, and Mr Gough Whitlam has not yet won even though yesterday he died as though he had. Certainly Mr Fraser has seen in the last by-elections and opinion polls his party's majorities soak up like storm water in a billing. As nobody expected such a win—not even Mr Whitlam who thought at first Mr Fraser was pulling a fast one over him—Australia's politicians, political pundits and pollsters alike blame upon the extraordinary "volatility" of the electorate. This enhanced volatility has been noted, with a comparable disapproval, in other democracies. Politicians seem to feel that they have somehow been double-crossed when voters suddenly turn their back on them in opinion polls when no election impends.

They should think again. There is no mystery. Professor Elton Mayo, the industrial psychologist, established that when an experiment on human beings is carried out the experiment itself enters the results—particularly if the human beings know they are being experimented with. A general election, and particularly a premature general election, is very definitely into that category of experiment. An election called to capitalize on an advantage, or on a mere stab, or unashamedly to prevent a less propitious time for it to appear for another period of time is a very risky experiment indeed when press and media

Guarding the otter

Mr I. J. Linn was interested to read the story in your issue of November 23, concerning the Government's proposal to make otters a protected species. My colleagues and I here at Exeter have been studying wild otters for many years, and would like to no one in our respect for the otter as one of Britain's most splendid wild creatures. Further, we would wholeheartedly support any measure which we felt would lead to a general increase in the number of otters, and to their return to areas where they have become very rare indeed.

It is, personally, have grave doubts about the wisdom of placing the otter under legal protection at the juncture, and I believe that the elements of those, such as Lord Emberton, who oppose this move should be listened to carefully, and not dismissed out of hand.

It is doubtless around the fact the "protection" of a species, as the law stands at present, means effectively "protecting the killing of that species", and this is simply not the kind of protection which the otter needs. There is no evidence of substance that, over the years, the killing of otters occurs on a sufficient scale to make the slightest difference to the total numbers. I would contend that in a rather large area of England, centred around the Midland, the otter is scarce enough to merit the term "endangered", and protection of the otter within this limited region would be entirely sensible.

For the rest of Britain, however, the otter is not yet endangered, and my view is that, by preventing the killing of otters, the Government

ideas on the value of intermediate technology for developing countries are now those of the World Bank, the Indian Government, and many others. He was not the only person but he was among the first to set the dangers and the absurdities of trying to drive developing countries straight into massive urban industrialization. As founder of the Intermediate Technology Development Group and adviser to many governments his work in this field has already had wide and lasting results.

The main question that remains over his work is how far it offers practical as well as spiritual guidance for developed societies. That his basic message is relevant needs no more proof than the growing number of people who show interest in it, from President Carter downwards. The problem is that many of the steps that would be necessary to turn it into practical politics are not easily compatible with democracy and a free economy. As President Carter is already finding, it is very difficult to make people conserve energy when there is in fact no shortage. By the time the shortage arrives the market will raise prices to the point where conservation becomes an economic necessity.

Dr Schumacher will then be vindicated to the extent that it will probably prove possible to make much larger savings in the use of energy than most people now realize is possible. Sweden's success in increasing energy productivity already points the way, and suggests, as Dr Schumacher would have agreed, that crisis can still be avoided. Waiting for market forces means, of course, that the adjustment will be more rapid and uncomfortable than if his exhortations could influence behaviour now, but his emotional disposition may have been too resistant, too modern trends, too pre-industrial, for him to have the practical effect in the developed countries that he has had in those countries still able to try other roads to development.

It may be argued that it would be better for Australians to stick to Mr Fraser's more cautious economic and monetary policies, even if their author perceives that they will take more time than he reckoned, and a world upswing as well, to work. But on the evidence the voters see little real choice especially now that Mr Fraser has a ministerial resignation to explain away almost as much as Mr Whitlam had in his time. The voters' disgust should worry Australian politicians, even in the midst of their enjoyable slanging matches: it bodes them all no good. And not only Australian politicians.

The so-called volatility of electorates is not unreasoned but the opposite: it is a judgment by thinking men and women endowed with intellect and with free will, upon the failures and unacceptable behaviour of those in office. Among those failures are not only mismanagement of public affairs, or miscalculations which are nobody's fault, but the arrogance of taking ordinary people for granted.

A European 'Brookings'

From Dr Frank A. Heller

Sir, I would support Mr Nind's reservations about a European or indeed a British "Brookings" (letter, November 25) and could cite other examples, many from my long association with South America, to show that institutions are not easily imported from overseas. However, this should not be used as an excuse to do nothing.

The case for a British or European centre for high level policy studies should be carefully and sympathetically considered. What is wrong with the current debate is largely due to the unfortunate use of the term "Brookings" which might lead us to concentrate exclusively on economics and political science on the American pattern.

When Professor Dahrendorf started his initiative he spoke of the need to diagnose the British malaise, and even eminent economists like Professor Caves of Harvard, political analysts like Svenn Schreber or multi-disciplinary inquiries like the notorious Hudson Report have told us clearly that our problems are social and even psychological as much as economic or political. We must therefore strive to get rid of the narrow "Brookings" image and accept that a wide range of social science disciplines should be brought to bear on policy studies. Yours truly,

FRANK A. HELLER,
Tavistock Institute of Human Relations,
Belsize Lane, NW3,
November 25.

which provided the trigger for the Civil Rights Movement. Such a comparison is utterly false. For the Catholic community in Northern Ireland there is one crucial difference above all others: in 1968 the Stormont Parliament existed and by convention a local government measure, which were devolved to the Westminster Parliament. By contrast if a regional authority were set up today, it would operate under the control of the Secretary of the Westminister Parliament.

It is important to realize that the Civil Rights Movement did not get off the ground in 1968 on the basis of anti-British sentiment but out of a general sense of grievance on the part of Catholics against Protestant majority rule in Northern Ireland. One prominent figure in the Movement (speaking in the Conway Hall, London on February 25, 1967) summarized the Movement's demands as follows:

"I must demand for my constituents in Belfast the same rights and privileges as are enjoyed by those in Coventry, Wades, Glasgow or any other part of the United Kingdom... So let us be quite clear what I am asking for is that British standards as they apply in the island of Great Britain should be made applicable in Northern Ireland."

That figure was Gerry Fitt, now the leader of the SDLP. Likewise, today, there is every reason to believe that if Northern Ireland had "British Standards" in central and local government institutions the Catholic community would be generally happy with them.

A regional authority could and should be established without delay. Given that it would have clearly defined and necessary functions to perform, it is much more likely to lead to practical cooperation between Protestants and Catholics than an elaborate parliamentary institution, especially one that from the outset is described as interim.

Yours, etc.
DAVID MORRISON,
Belfast, 15,
November 26.

whose differences have been eroded;

(2) it is a standing provocation to those groups with industrial muscle, and especially those with their fingers on the nation's windpipe, to use their strength to break through the limit;

(3) it gives a stick to the irresponsible mafiosi within such union or professional body with which to beat the more long-suffering, responsible and benevolent moderates;

(4) it instantly turns the maximum into a minimum, and every group which fails to achieve the limit feels itself aggrieved: and, above all,

(5) it is a self-righteous move round the Government's own neck which (unless it can pass it off as a phoney "productivity deal" or similar hypocrisy) forces it to admit defeat whenever any group "breaks the pay policy".

If the present (or any other) Government were to adopt a proper, flexible incomes policy which allowed it to do justice to the firemen and other victims of its own folly while realising both the greater, if only in fractions, "freedom for all" and the blockade of groups like the power workers whose threats have been decisively rejected by the public, it would not only save its own face and electoral prospects but much more importantly save the country from the self-destructive social conflict over relative pay which now threatens our precarious economic recovery.

Yours faithfully,
HAROLD PERKIN,
Barton,
Lancaster.

A free currency

From Lord Balogh

Sir, It is certainly very fitting that Mr Phillips (letter, November 25), a director of the merchant bank of Berwick, should consider it a cause for shame rather than satisfaction that, alone of the world's leading industrial countries, we have been denied the prestige and the benefits of a free currency for the past 38 years. That does not mean, however, that the freedom to export capital is in the national interest. I have given (letter, November 24) analytical reasons why I believe it to be contrary to those interests. He has answered none of them.

The export of capital did not lift exports from this country at a rate seconded by Germany or the US pre-1914 or between 1925-30. As to the propensity to export capital, the fact is that our large companies are

expanding their foreign operations faster than their domestic ones even in the present recessionary period of control. This tendency would continue if it were abandoned. I would refer Mr Phillips to the careful study of Mr Correlli Barnett's *The Collapse of British Power*, about the history of the process which weakened this country.

It is significant that economic expansion was at its lowest level when capital export was at its height. Britain experienced economic progress comparable to that of our competitors only in periods of protection (safeguarding and McKenna duties and Ottawa). The lesson is there to be learnt.

Yours, etc.,
THOMAS BALOGH,
Balliol College,
Oxford.
November 28.

Support any of the alternative methods of voting that is likely to command a majority in Parliament, and will allow the elections to take place on schedule. The shadow foreign secretary, John Davies, has said that he doesn't care "tuppence" which electoral system is used. We agree with him, and urge Conservative MPs to take the same sensible and principled view.

As David Wood so clearly points out, for our MPs to do otherwise would be to betray their European principles.

To delay the Bill and therefore the elections to gain some imagined party advantage is foolish and self-deceptive. No sensible Conservative could contemplate such action.

Yours faithfully,
BOB HUGHES,
Vice-Chairman,
National Union of Conservative and Unionist Associations,
15 Lulworth Avenue,
Hounslow, Middlesex.

Sculptured elms

From Mrs Jane Blensdorf

Sir, I would like to join this correspondence in order to encourage sculptors and woodworkers to explore the possibilities of using the now plentiful elm trunks.

My late husband, the sculptor Ernst Blensdorf, worked for 36 years using elm as his main material, and was not deterred by the presence of Dutch elm disease, which lies only under the bark.

He worked the wood fresh and unseasoned, counteracting any tendency to crack by drilling a hole right through the core of the trunk. All his sculptures were protected from insect attack by a few applications of a recognized woodworm dressing. The result of this treatment is that all his pieces have survived without any rotting or cracking.

Yours faithfully,
JANE BLENSDORF,
Gladon,
Bruton,
Somerset.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE TIMES PAST 100 YEARS

New Printing House Square, London, WC1X 8EZ. Telephone: 01-837 1234

A MESSAGE HALF HEARD

There has never been any shortage of prophets and preachers asserting that mankind is moving in the wrong direction, and the pursuit of wealth does not necessarily bring happiness, that a reawakening of moral and spiritual perception is necessary if disaster is to be avoided. From time to time one of these prophets evokes a response which tells as much about the time in which he lives as about the message he brings. Dr Fritz Schumacher, for whom a memorial service was held yesterday in Westminster Cathedral, was such a one. What he preached, as he himself said, derived mainly from the traditional wisdom of mankind, which has always been respected and not ignored. He quoted the icon on the Mount, the teachings of Buddha, and the

teachings of R. H. Tawney, and that "unless industry is to be paralysed by recurrent revolts on the part of outraged human nature it must satisfy criteria which are not purely economic". But he managed to relate his message to very contemporary doubts and fears about the world today. He was a preacher with long experience in the world of economics and industry, and he brought to get the spiritual and the practical in a way that set up reverberations beyond his immediate circle of admirers.

To appreciate him as a significant contemporary figure does not necessarily mean agreeing with everything he said. To some extent he hoped for changes in society which at present lie beyond realism. Nevertheless, he contributed a great deal. He wrote his book *Small is Beautiful* at the moment when advanced industrial societies were entering a period of extreme self-doubt about their own viability and the validity as a model for developing countries. Hopes of overcoming poverty, crime, alienation and unemployment

through continuous economic growth have been disappointed. The fact that more people are living longer and more secure lives than at any time in history has come to seem less important than that the beneficiaries of industrial development seem less happy and fulfilled than they were expected to be while the majority of the world's population is excluded even from the benefits that are available. Work for many people is still degrading drudgery; leisure is not necessarily the most satisfying aim in life; above all, the scale of things—especially of industrial, political and bureaucratic structures—is felt to be overpowering the individual.

Dr Schumacher did not advocate smallness as the answer to everything. The title of his book has misled many people. What he was talking about was the appropriate size for different structures—some large, some small. He concentrated on smallness, he said, only to counteract the idolatry of giantism. Were there an idolatry of smallness he would have exerted his influence in the other direction. "The fundamental problem is to achieve smallness within large organizations", he wrote. People can be themselves only in small comprehensible groups. It was not, therefore, the abandonment of economic growth or the escape to the pastoral simplicity of the commune that he was advocating, but a spiritual "homecoming" that would bring a qualitative measure to bear on the idea of growth. Modern technology, he felt, was pursuing size and speed and violence in defiance of natural harmony.

His disapproval was fundamentally moral but it contributed to thinking in several very practical and important areas. His ideas on size have become part of the common currency of discussion on a range of issues from housing through industry to devolution and the European Community. His warnings that natural resources are limited and need to be conserved have almost dissolved into conventional wisdom. Above all, his

ideas on the value of intermediate technology for developing countries are now those of the World Bank, the Indian Government, and many others. He was not the only person but he was among the first to set the dangers and the absurdities of trying to drive developing countries straight into massive urban industrialization. As founder of the Intermediate Technology Development Group and adviser to many governments his work in this field has already had wide and lasting results.

The main question that remains over his work is how far it offers practical as well as spiritual guidance for developed societies. That his basic principles, as the term "interim devolution" implies, is that "the arrangement should be temporary and should envisage progress towards full legislative devolution" to establish political institutions which are from the outset understood to be temporary is a doubtful constitutional principle. To do so at this time in Northern Ireland where a nationalist/unionist government, which were devolved to the Westminster Parliament. By contrast if a regional authority were set up today, it would operate under the control of the Secretary of the Westminister Parliament.

It is important to realize that the Civil Rights Movement did not get off the ground in 1968 on the basis of anti-British sentiment but out of a general sense of grievance on the part of Catholics against Protestant majority rule in Northern Ireland. One prominent figure in the Movement (speaking in the Conway Hall, London on February 25, 1967) summarized the Movement's demands as follows:

From Dr David Morrison

Sir, Your editorial of November 21 discusses the concept of "interim devolution" for Northern Ireland and Roy Mason has since laid down principles on which the concept should be based.

One of these principles, as the term "interim devolution" implies, is that "the arrangement should be temporary and should envisage progress towards full legislative devolution". To establish political institutions which are from the outset understood to be temporary is a doubtful constitutional principle. To do so at this time in Northern Ireland where a nationalist/unionist government, which were devolved to the Westminster Parliament. By contrast if a regional authority were set up today, it would operate under the control of the Secretary of the Westminister Parliament.

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COURT CIRCULAR

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
November 30: His Excellency Monsieur Jens Christensen was received in audience by The Queen this morning and presented the Letters of Recall of his Envoy, and the Letters of Credence as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Kingdom of Denmark to the Court of St James's.

His Excellency was accompanied by the following members of the Embassy, who had the honour of being presented to Her Majesty: Monsieur Ferdinand Kien (Minister Counsellor), Monsieur Serge Vagner Blond (Minister Counsellor), Monsieur Harry Abergab (Minister Plenipotentiary), His Highness Colonel Prince George of Denmark (Defence Attaché), Monsieur Jean Marcussen (Commercial Counsellor), Monsieur Ulrik Andreas Federspiel (First Secretary), and Monsieur Erik Hedeberg (First Secretary). Madame Christensen had the honour of being received by The Queen.

Mr Michael Pallister (Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs), who had the honour of being received by Her Majesty, was present and the Gentlemen of the Household in Waiting were in attendance.

Mr G. A. Crossley was received in audience by The Queen and kissed hands upon his appointment as Her Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Holy See.

Mrs Christensen had the honour of being received by The Queen at Justice Wood had the honour of being received by Her Majesty upon his appointment as a Justice of the High Court of Justice when The Queen conferred upon him the honour of Knighthood.

The Right Hon James Callaghan, MP (Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury), had an audience of Her Majesty this evening.

The Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, this morning received

the Marquess of Lothian (Lord Lieutenant of the Shetlands) and Mr Anthony Gray (Secretary and Keeper of the Records, Duchy of Cornwall).

His Royal Highness, Chairman, opened and toured an exhibition of Royal Cartoons in aid of The Queen's Silver Jubilee Appeal at the Press Club, International Press Centre, Strand, London, EC4.

The Prince of Wales was present at luncheon with Senior Officers of A Division Metropolitan Police at New Scotland Yard.

His Royal Highness, President, this evening presented the Royal Aero Club's Prizes for 1977 and the Kremer Prize at the Royal Automobile Club, Pall Mall.

KENSINGTON PALACE
November 30: The Duke of Gloucester attended The Evening News British Film Awards at the New London Theatre, Drury Lane, and presented the Gold Medal for the best British Film this evening.

Major John Griffin was in attendance.

YORK HOUSE
November 30: The Duke of Kent, President of the Scout Association, this morning attended a meeting of the Committee of the Council at Baden Powell House.

His Royal Highness, President of the Imperial War Museum, this afternoon presided at the Meeting of the Board of Trustees.

Lieutenant-Commander Richard Buckley, RN, was in attendance.

His Royal Highness this evening attended the Professional Wrestling Tournament at the Royal Albert Hall in aid of the Silver Jubilee Appeal.

Captain James Greenfield was in attendance.

THATCHER HOUSE LODGE
November 30: Princess Alexandra and the Hon Angus Ogilvy were present this evening at the opening of the Burlington International Fine Art Fair at the Royal Academy of Arts.

The Lady Mary Fitzalan-Howard was in attendance.

The Queen will open the extension of the Piccadilly Line to Heathrow and travel on the Underground from Hounslow Cross to Heathrow Central on December 15.

The Prince of Wales, as chairman of the Queen's Silver Jubilee Appeal Fund, will visit Greater Manchester on December 14.

A service of thanksgiving for the life of the Dowager Marchioness of Tweeddale will be held at St Colman's Church, Strand, on Tuesday, December 5, at noon.

The Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, this morning received

Birthdays today

Lord Cross of Chelsea, 73; Professor J. A. Douglas, 93; Dame Alicia Markova, 87; Dame Mildred Riddiford, 64; Mr Cyril Pritchard, 79; The Lord Roll of Ipsden, 77; Mr D. S. Souter, QC, 71; Mr C. F. Tunnicliffe, 76.

Duke for Philippines

The Duke of Kent, a vice-chairman of the British Overseas Trade Board, will make a three-day visit to the Philippines in March during Far East tour of the British Embassy in Manila, announced yesterday. He will first spend three days in Hong Kong to attend a British Industrial exhibition on March 5. Later he will visit Singapore.

Latest appointments

Latest appointments include: Mr J. F. Porter, Principal, Birkbeck College of Higher Education, Far East, in the British Commonwealth Institute from April 2, in succession to Mr J. K. Thompson, who retires on December 31.

Prize for translation of Italian book

The Florio Prize for the best English translation of an Italian book has been awarded this year to Ruth Feldman and Brian Swann for their translation of *Shema*, a collection of poems by Primo Levi (London, £1.10). The prize, worth £400, was established in 1961 by the Italian Institute, the British-Italian Society, and the Translators' Association.

The 1977 Christmas Box
Skating on Cheyne Wharf...
The beautiful hand-coloured box will be produced in Britain only until 31st December 1977.
£13.90 plus P&P 45p

Requiem Masses

Worldwide tributes for apostle of simplicity

Dr Ernst Friedrich Schumacher, author of *Small is Beautiful* and pioneer of post-capitalist, post-Communist thought, was commemorated at a requiem Mass at Westminster Cathedral yesterday.

Before a gathering from many countries and stations in life Mr Jerry Brown, Governor of California, a friend and follower of Schumacher, described him as a man of utter simplicity who moved large numbers by the force of his ideas and personality.

He challenged the fundamental beliefs of modern society from the context of ancient wisdom, including that of Christianity and Buddhism. Mr Brown said: An audience was also given by the Rev Dr Beatson-Hird.

Cardinal Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, was present at the requiem Mass which was celebrated by Bishop Augustin Harris and Bishop Gerald Ashton. Lady Eva Saltz (St. John's Association) and George Al-Robie (Intermediate Technology Group) read the lessons.

The High Commissioner for Zambia read a message from President Kaunda. Others present included:

Mr Schumacher (widow), Mr and Mrs John Schumacher, Mr and Mrs John and Mrs Donald Schumacher and their daughter, Mrs Judith Kelly.



"Rotterdam—a street scene", by Willem Koekkoek, which fetched £20,000.

£71,385 for John Evelyn sale

By Geraldine Norman
Sale Room Correspondent

Christie's dispersal of the library

gathered largely by John Evelyn,

the great seventeenth-century

diarist, continued yesterday.

The sale started at £1,000 with 5

per cent unsold. In contrast to last

summer's sale from the collection

prices exceeded expectations only

for the most outstanding works

prices for which were lower

than expected.

Discusses was represented by a

first edition of his great work,

Discours de la methode pour bien

conduire sa raison de 1657 at £8,000

(estimate £6,000 to 16,000); it was

bought by Evelyn's biographer,

John Evelyn, in a con-

temporary mottled calf. The same

price was paid for a topographical

work of 1656, a first edition of

Gravina's *Das libres de cosmogra-*

phie (estimate £4,000 to 25,000).

One of the projects entered in

for Napoleon's competition

for a building to replace the

Spanish mystical work of 1589 in

Evelyn's binding was sold for

£120 (estimate £150 to £200).

Another bargain was Galle's *Le*

venti giorni dell'agricoltura, of

1623, with fine woodcut illustra-

tions, bought in Paris for Evelyn,

£150 (estimate £250 to £400).

One of the more unusual lots

was a group of 11 seventeenth-

century pamphlets bound up for

John Evelyn, held at £7,000 (estimate £1,000 to £1,200) to Quaritch.

Among them was Galle's *Le*

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John Foord
CHARTERED SURVEYORS

THE TIMES

BUSINESS NEWS

John Foord
PLANT AND
MACHINERY
VALUERS

Bank quells fears over interest rates with signal to hold MLR

By John Whitmore

Financial Correspondent

The Bank of England yesterday moved to recall growing increase in interest rates by informing the discount houses that it had no wish to see a further rise in its own minimum lending rate.

This action had an immediate and dramatic effect on financial markets. Three month Treasury bills, the key to minimum lending rate, dropped back from 6.6% per cent to close at 6.5% 13/32 per cent, a level consistent with MLR remaining unchanged at 7 per cent tomorrow.

Other money market rates also fell back. Three month interbank money, which had risen 84 per cent in early trading eventually finished at 7.1 per cent. Gilts edged stocks which had been up to 51 down in early trading quickly erased their morning losses to finish the day with gains of up to 51. And the FT 30 share index, down 4.2 points ahead of the Bank's statement, closed 6.9 points higher at 481.0.

The decision by the Bank to postpone its feelings on interest rates to the market came after the growing uncertainty that had been building up in financial markets late on Tuesday afternoon.

The Bank made it clear to the discount market that it

regarded last week's 2 per cent rise in MLR to 7 per cent as adequately correcting the distortion to the interest rate structure that had occurred earlier in the autumn because of the exceptionally heavy overseas inflows.

Although the Bank's move was generally welcomed in markets as helping to clear the air, there was only limited activity before the turnaround in the gilt edged market where there is continuing uncertainty about the authorities' ability to resume gilt sales on any great scale.

The Bank's announcement that it wished to see no further rise in MLR for the time being was quickly followed by an announcement that Williams & Glyn's was to raise its base rate from 6 to 7 per cent. The deposit rate is to go up from 3 to 3.5 per cent.

This means that each of the five London clearing banks now has a different base rate.

Barclays, which has still to make any move from the 6 per cent level, continued to mull over the situation yesterday afternoon. But, assuming that money markets show signs of stability this morning, it seems likely that Barclays will not delay a decision for very much longer.

Financial Editor, page 19

Leyland may seek £50m more to meet cash crisis

By Clifford Webb

Leyland Cars, which lost £15.7m in the first half of the year, is facing another cash flow crisis as a result of mounting losses from internal and external strikes.

So serious is the situation that if the present trend continues it will have to seek another injection of government cash within the next few weeks.

It is only two months since the present British Leyland group received a £50m loan from the National Enterprise Board. This money—originally intended for capital investment projects—had to be diverted for the day-to-day requirements of the car subsidiary.

A further £50m tranche was expected next February after Mr Michael Edwards, the new chairman, has submitted a review of the group's position and his own plans for rescuing it.

It now seems certain that this money will have to be used again as part of that review and renewed scrutiny by the NED and the Department of Industry.

This further setback in the long running saga of Leyland Cars is being revealed this week in management briefings to shop steward members of the three-tier participation machinery.

So far the news has been given to the top two tiers—Leyland Cars Joint Management Council and the divisional committees. During the next few days the 34 plant committees will be put in the picture.

Stewards have been told that the company is "poised on the edge of a precipice". Things began to go wrong through the recent long-running strike at Lucas, together with strikes in the plant itself, the one which stopped production of the TR7 sports car, and the Dolomite saloon for the past month.

As a result production fell sharply and Leyland are now holding only 22 per cent of the home market compared with more than 30 per cent last year.

The stewards were warned that Leyland could run out of money by the middle of December unless there was a substantial improvement.

On life insurance problems, Money Which? found the brokers did not ask enough questions accurately to assess the clients' needs. Most failed to suggest any cover at all on the wife's life, though the family were supposed to have two small children.

Money Which? concludes that the new council "has a major task ahead of it if it is to lift the current standard of information and advice being given".

The magazine suggests that the code of conduct for the industry which the council will prepare should require brokers to make it clear if they only deal with a limited number of companies, and let the customer know if they do not have specialist need of the type of insurance wanted.

Mr Lubomir Sekulic, chairman of the group, said it had informed the president of the conference, which is organized by the United Nations' Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), that the developing countries had unanimously decided to seek the suspension.

"We shall make a formal motion to this effect in the plenary meeting tomorrow," he said as he was negotiating conference scheduled to end on Friday.

Mr Sekulic blamed the developed countries for the impasse saying that the group of 77 was taking this "serious step" because some developed countries were unwilling even to agree to the fundamental aspects of a common fund.

This was despite the commitments given by the developed countries at UNCTAD's Nairobi meeting and at the North/South dialogue in Paris last summer.

Commodity fund talks at deadlock

Insurance brokers fail 'Which' test

By Robin Young

On the day the Insurance Brokers Registration Council is set up to monitor the industry, it gets a scathing report in Money Which?, published today by the Consumers' Association.

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BPM HOLDINGS LTD

"DOES THE ROAD WIND UPHILL ALL THE WAY?"

The 34th Annual General Meeting of BPM Holdings Limited was held on November 30th, 1977, in Birmingham.

The following are extracts from the circulated statement of the chairman, Sir Michael Clapham, K.B.E.

"While the scene is not entirely dark, either nationally or in our company's affairs, the year 1976/77 was, as I have indicated, the year of the greatest difficulty for growth. Competition was intense and profits were hard to earn. In the circumstances an increase in pre-tax profits of 50% is welcome, and enables us to recommend increasing the dividend by the amount of 10%. We cannot regard it as yet being satisfactory, but looking to the future, I am confident that I can expect a positive contribution on behalf of the shareholders, to the considerable efforts both by managers and other employees, which enabled the company to move in the direction of a tolerable return on capital.

"I voted in the need in our newspaper activities, to reduce manpower, streamline production methods and complete the introduction of the new technology at Colmore Circus with as little hardship as possible. 1976/77 has been a year of substantial progress in that task. There have been voluntary redundancies, and the considerable sums paid out in compensation have reduced the year's profits. We have also been reducing production costs, through people's work and disciplines while moving from hot metal to computer-based photo-composition which have been irritating in editorial and production staff, management and, not least, our readers and advertisers. There is still some way to go to complete the change of technology, but in retrospect it has been a year of marked progress.

"All went well in the coming year. The recovery in our affairs, and particularly the introduction of the new technology should be taken to a further stage. But it will be a testing period in our industrial relations, as the Government's very necessary pressure to reduce the rate of inflation encounters the resentment built up in a year when prices have risen much faster than net incomes and the anomalies arising from years of rigid controls have become more glaring.

"The circulation of the papers at the Birmingham Post & Mail, and the Sunday Mirror, and the Evening Standard, showed a good trend, and in particular the Sandwell Evening Mail showed a good gain in circulation as it did in advertising. Advertisement volumes in the other papers did not quite reach the previous year's levels, owing to the depressed state of the retail market.

"However, a realistic policy on advertisement rates and cover prices resulted in a substantial increase in revenue, matched by almost equally large increases in newsprint and service costs and the other salaries, wages and national insurance contributions.

"West Midland Press achieved the best year since moving into the Leamore plant at Wall, and has shown a small increase in profits to just below the 1976 peak. Profits were held back by the costs of the refitting programme which is now virtually completed, and by the large increase in branch wages resulting from the 5% per week increase which was given in July 1976 under Phase 1 of the pay policy. There was a net increase of only one in the number of branches during the year, yet renewed growth is planned for the current year."

The Report and Accounts were adopted.

BPM HOLDINGS LTD

28 Colmore Circus, Birmingham B4 6AX

How the markets moved

Rises

Allied Polymer 63p to 33p
Anglo Am Corp 14p to 28p
Blythers 11p to 34p
CIMI 47p
Beyant Holdings 3p to 36p
Dunlop Holdings 4p to 83p
EMI 6p to 21sp
ERF Holdings 5p to 12sp
Furless Withy 18p to 33p

Falls

Ayer Hiltam 5p to 275p
ES of NSW 5p to 15p
Guthrie Corp 3p to 12p
Hays Wharf 3p to 16p
Johnson Matthey 3p to 43p

Equities advanced.
Gilt-edged securities reversed
Early losses.
Dollar premium 98 per cent
(effective rate 38.37 per cent)
Sterling gained 22 points to
\$1.8170. The effective exchange
rate index was at 63.5.

Reports pages 20 and 22

On other pages

Business appointments 21
Appointments vacant 8
Wall Street 22
Bank Base Rates Table 22
Annual Statements: BPM Holdings 17

Swan Hunter loses 3 of 7 Polish ships as work is reassigned

By Peter Hill
Industrial Correspondent

British Shipbuilders yesterday carried out its plan to reassign Polish shipbuilding contracts to other yards because of the slowdown in work at Swan Hunter, originally scheduled to build seven 16,500 ton dwt bulk carriers worth £25m.

The company stated that it had the "greatest hope and intention" that the ships would go to the Tyneside group. It deeply regretted that this was not possible because of the decision by 1,700 outfitting workers to maintain their overtime ban which had prevented the placing of the contracts.

Further assessment of the most beneficial switching of the contracts is being carried out by British Shipbuilders' executives, and privately there is some hope that the re-assigned workers at Swan's will reconsider their decision—which will lead to further redundancies and a cutting off of the ban coupled with the provision of assurances, would still allow the four contracts to be placed with the Tyneside yards.

Two other ships in the Swan package, said the state company, were being re-located to other northern shipyards. The other yards involved were not disclosed, but industry sources suggested that Sunderland Shipbuilders and Austin & Pickersgill, both of which are scheduled to build seven 16,500 ton dwt bulk carriers worth £25m.

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Obviously the chances of our looking at the use of public money in the shipbuilding industry is not made out, backbenchers as such, was no basis for an investigation.



Mr Archie Gilchrist, managing director of Govan, said last night: "Under present market circumstances any order is welcome, but I would much rather have obtained orders in happier circumstances".

Mr Edward du Cann, MP, chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, dashed hopes that the committee would launch an emergency investigation into the terms of the deal.

His comments followed a request made at the weekend by Mr Michael Grylls, MP, vice-chairman of the Tory Industry Committee. Mr du Cann explained that the PAC was concerned essentially with investigating the use of public money on issues referred to the committee by the Comptroller and Auditor General. Since the CAG had so far made no report there was no basis for an investigation.

Whether this will result in reduced prices to the customer we cannot say specifically because it is not part of our remit to inquire into prices or margins as such", an Office of Fair Trading spokesman said. But customers will be free to strike their own bargain, it was pointed out.

The Office is still discussing with the RHA third party agreements on rates in which in some cases the RHA acts as a negotiating body with a major customer group. Since the association does not always negotiate as such, much of such cases may come within the scope of present legislation.

Major haulage users like British Steel and the Milk Marketing Board can sometimes find it convenient to set out a national guide to what they are prepared to pay. The same can apply to other groups such as quarry owners.

The RHA will continue to advise its members on matters like cost estimation, particularly in relation to the effect of inflation. The Office will continue scrutiny of this sort of advice to ensure that it does not become a price-fixing device in a different guise.

So far there have been 700 submissions for possible registration to the office from the various service industry sectors.

It has not been found necessary to register 200 of these agreements but a further 200 are now registered, with others still to be considered.

From Peter Norman
Bonn, Nov 30

West Germany today decided to clamp down on the granting of export credit guarantees to companies trading with South Africa.

In the future Bonn will only be prepared to guarantee credits to DMS50m (about £12m) in value where payment is made in the short or medium term, a period of less than five years.

But today's cabinet decisions reflected more a pragmatic approach than a moral approach to the trading activities of German companies abroad.

For the same time as restricting guarantees on exports to South Africa, the cabinet agreed to provide guarantees to cover the export of four nuclear power stations to Iran and the delivery of a submarine to the military regime in Argentina.

The guarantees for the Iran nuclear deal, which is currently being negotiated with Siemens subsidiary Kraftwerke Union AG, will be the largest ever taken over by the West German government.

Although the company's dominance in the industry has been rapidly eroded over the past 30 years—its sales accounted for 85 per cent of demand in 1950, but this is likely to be only 30 per cent—it is still by far the largest producer and has been bearing the brunt of the nickel price increases.

By the end of September the company's stockpile of finished nickel had risen to 306 million lb, some three times the normal level, and getting close to the level of Inco's expected total for this year.

The company in line with other major producers has been cutting back production and has reduced its prices sharply as a price war has gained momentum in the industry.

Mackie is forced to honour its pay agreement, to bring straightforward breach of contract cases.

The Treasury, on August 19, without directly naming Mackie, announced its intention to use section 2 of the export credit legislation as one sanction. This says that for the purpose of encouraging trade with other countries or rendering economic assistance to countries outside the United Kingdom, the Secretary of State for Trade may, with the consent of the Treasury, make arrangements for giving such guarantees to, or for the benefit of, persons carrying on business in the United Kingdom as appear to him expedient in the interest.

There is no statutory pay policy, and the introduction of criteria not previously used in setting applications for export credit guarantees may be argued as contrary to the intention of Parliament in providing guarantees in the national interest.

While the national interest is not capable of legal definition, some lawyers believe that discretion to give guarantees as appear to be in the national interest solely derives from the nature of the application for assistance in the context of overseas trade alone.

The Act was passed for the purposes of encouraging foreign trade, so was a refusal to Mackie of an application inconsistent?

Dear Sirs,
The claims you make in your advertising seem so modest in relation to my own experience that I thought you might be interested in the figures.

My gas bill for 1975 was £235.54 and the estimate for 1976 was £372. At the time of the last reading in 1975 you completed the cavity wall insulation of my house and I subsequently put 31 glass fibres between the rafters above the kitchen where the heating boiler is situated.

The enclosed photocopies show that my 1976 bill fell to £169.91.

Inspire of an increase in the price per therm.

To say that I am delighted is an understatement.

Yours faithfully, RR Murray

It's a fact that Ufoam Plus cavity wall insulation carried out by Cape Insulation Services experts can reduce your heating bills by up to 25% or more, and pay for itself in 3-5 years.

Builders see no backing for 'dock labour' plan

By Paul Routledge
Labour Editor

Building employers are cautiously optimistic that they have blocked trade union efforts to introduce a "dock labour" scheme of workers' registration and fall-back pay.

The Construction Industry Manpower Board (CIMB), set up two years ago to advise the Government on employment, is expected on December 12 to agree an interim report recommending voluntary registries of employers. The thorny issue of sanctions against companies refusing to participate will almost certainly be left to the two sides of the industry to decide.

Building industry unions, backed by the TUC Construction Committee, have long argued the need for decasualisation of the industry under a statutory register of both employers and employees to be implemented by a Manpower Board armed with sanctions against companies refusing to take part. All registered building workers would be guaranteed employment or "fall-back" pay.

The employers have fought this proposal on the grounds that a statutory register would be an inflexible intervention in the industry's manpower practices and harmful to commercial success. It now seems almost certain that the CIMB will recommend to Mr Freeson, Minister for Housing and Construction, that three voluntary registers of employers should be set up covering building, civil engineering and specialist sub-contractors. The criteria for registration, and any question of sanctions, will be left for the industry's collective bargaining machinery if the employers have their way.

The CIMB is working to terms of reference laid down by the Government "to advise the Secretary of State for the Environment on the desirability of statutory or other measures to increase the stability of employment in the construction industry and, in particular, the desirability of establishing a statutory authority to implement measures for that purpose which could also include a register of employers and employees".

In the face of strenuous delaying tactics by the employers, the unions have gradually dropped their insistence on statutory registration and are returning the employers to voluntary registration.

But they are still deeply divided over the question of sanctions and may in the end reject the kind of enforcement provisions that the unions urge are vital to the success of the scheme.

Population decline in big UK cities

By Caroline Atkinson

Fewer people now live and work in densely populated areas. The dispersal of population and jobs from crowded urban areas since the beginning of the 1960s is noted in a report prepared by the Department of Employment's Unit for Manpower studies.

Between 1961 and 1974 the population in Britain's seven major conurbations has declined by 6.8 per cent. Meanwhile the rest of Britain has grown by 13.4 per cent.

Resident labour forces have also declined in the seven conurbations of Greater London, Central Clydeside, Merseyside, South East, Lancashire, Tyne-side, West Midlands and West Yorkshire.

Between 1951 and 1961 the labour force in the metropolitan areas, in all but two of the number of managers, professionals and self-employed increased, although the most obvious difference between the

years the labour force shrank by 7.2 per cent in the urban areas while growing by 11.5 per cent outside the seven.

Despite their relative decline in importance in terms of population and employment these large metropolitan areas still dominate in absolute size. About a third of Britain lives in the big seven, and they accounted for 35 per cent of the resident British labour force in 1971.

The report suggests that as living standards have improved and communications advanced, the pursuit of more space outside the cities has made possible. This trend is also thought likely to continue.

In spite of the decline in the labour force in the metropolitan areas, in all but two the number of managers, professionals and self-employed increased, although the most

obvious difference between the

employment for 1976. The number of men in full-time employment fell by 144,000 and the number of women by 56,000.

There has been a marked slackening in the trend of growing female part-time employment in the 1970s, which has not been picked up by the quarterly census. The 34,000 increase between 1975 and 1976 was the smallest since the annual census began in 1971.

More accidents

In the first three months of 1977 there were 52,677 accidents at work notified to the Factory Inspectorate, of which 110 were fatal. This is 11,145 more than in the last quarter of 1976. Miners are excluded from these figures.

The area with the most accidents in the latest quarter was the Northeast, where 5,657 took place with 14 fatalities.

Employment falls

The number of jobs in Britain fell by 165,000 between June, 1975 and 1976, to 22,045,000. This is shown in the results for the detailed annual census of

employment for 1976. The number of men in full-time employment fell by 144,000 and the number of women by 56,000.

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Union membership up

Total union membership rose by 3.6 per cent to reach 12,376,000 in 1976. The total number of unions rose from 461 to 462. The 11 largest unions had 62.4 per cent of total membership. Men accounted for 71.2 per cent of all union members, but the proportion of women in the unions increased slightly from 26.4 per cent to 23.8 per cent.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Threat from cut-price EEC process plant

From Mr J. L. Good

Most of the projects for which fabricators are being ordered abroad are in the assisted areas and benefit from Government help funded by the State for Trade related to the need for Britain and its European partners to have selective safeguards against disruptive imports.

The process plant industry's current concern is not about low-cost producers outside Europe but cut-price competition in the home market coming mainly from within the European Community and against which there is no protection whatsoever.

Reports received by this association show that over recent months British fabricators have lost business worth well over £25m to foreign competitors. This work has been lost on price and price alone; quality and delivery are not in issue. In many cases orders have been placed at 30-50 per cent below United Kingdom prices.

The fabricating sector, though working well below capacity, is making every effort to keep its labour force intact. However, if business continues to be lost at the present rate redundancies next spring are inevitable. It is time for the United Kingdom process industries to look beyond the short-term advantages of opportunist purchasing and to recognise that they risk inflicting permanent damage on the British supply capability to the detriment of customers and suppliers alike.

The research, carried out since September 1974, examines the effects on food shopping habits of an Asda supermarket and a Hillards supermarket on the outskirts of the city.

It shows that the proportion of car shoppers using York city centre dropped from 25 per cent to 23 per cent over the first 12 months. Non-food stores in the city centre closed as others lost trade between the Asda opened in 1974 and April 1976.

Shops which closed down included a Fine Fare branch with 4,000 sq ft of selling area but no car parking.

York, a study of Shopping

Centre, by the York Junior Chamber of Commerce, Hungate, York JO1 2PA.

larity financial matters—may

consume hours in preparation and days before the tribunal.

If the employer is successful, he can expect no order for costs, save in the case where he can satisfy the tribunal that the applicant acted frivolously or vexatiously. Such cases are very rare, and are ones in which High Court actions are struck out on similar grounds.

Even if costs are awarded, they are awarded (unless agreed or fixed at a lump sum) on one of the county court scales which, particularly with the impact of inflation, yield substantially less than the actual costs incurred; and costs ordered are only recoverable to the extent that the party ordered to pay them has funds—which very frequently is not.

The reasons are simple. The burden of proof rests upon the employer. Even the simplest case may require the attendance of several witnesses; the more complex case, involving a long history of events—and particu-

Shirt workers in Northern Ireland

From Mr G. Doltis

Sir, It was of great interest to read of the bishop's concern (Letter, November 29) for Hong Kong.

We own five factories in Northern Ireland producing shirts, one of which is in Strabane, which has a 40 per cent rate of unemployment. Could he not show some concern for the shirt workers in Northern Ireland with all their troubles? The EEC is not advocating a total ban of imports, but a cut in the future rate of growth.

It is very difficult to maintain sales when the market is being flooded with shirts for half our price. The bishop should advocate decent wages and working hours for the Hong Kong workers so that sales would be on merit and not on sweatshop labour.

Yours faithfully,
G. DOLTIS,
Chairman,
Burlington (Savile Row) Shirts
Ltd,
25 Savile Row,
London, W1X 1AA.

Inflation

From Mr Patrick Lawrence

Sir, "Inflation's licked" some daily papers shriek.

"It will no more the nation's vigour sap" (Production's less than in the three-day week) Which shows our true regeneration gap.

Your obedient servant,
PATRICK LAWRENCE,
Glebe House,
Fawley,
Wantage,
Oxfordshire,
November 17

Effect of employment protection law

From Mr David Green

Shorty before an expected ruling on the treaty by the Foreign Relations Committee in September, Governor Brown was reported to have altered his view on this provision, fearing adverse consequences for foreign investment in the state.

In hearings before the Foreign Relations Committee in July, California state tax authorities opposed this provision, Article 9(4), on grounds it impinged on state versus federal tax rights. Reuter.

The only practical advice that can give to any employer

concerned with a claim for unfair dismissal by an employee

within six months stand-

ing is that it will cost him up-

wards of £150 for his own and

his lawyer's time to contest it

—win or lose; and that it will

therefore pay him, regardless

of the merits, to pay a substi-

tial sum to dispose of it.

The reasons are simple. The

burden of proof rests upon the

employer. Even the simplest

case may require the attendance

of several witnesses; the more

complex case, involving a long

history of events—and particu-

larity financial matters—may

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Even if costs are awarded, they are awarded (unless agreed or fixed at a lump sum) on one of the county court scales which, particularly with the impact of inflation, yield substantially less than the actual costs incurred; and costs ordered are only recoverable to the extent that the party ordered to pay them has funds—which very frequently is not.

It may be that Parliament intended to place employers in a position in which they are on

a bidding to nothing; that it

wished to create a charter by

which employees, however

properly dismissed, should al-

ways be in a position to repre-

sent for a lump sum in as-

set. If it did then these are acts

of life with which employers

must learn to live. But em-

ployees do not accept principles

of justice, it should not sur-

prise us that some employers

protect them to be unjust; and

it does not become lawy়er-

ism and gauntry what happens

in practice, by reference to the

minimal and largely inoper-

ative restraints contained in the

legislation.

Yours faithfully,

DAVID GREEN,

Rhod yr Hedd, Castle Morris,

Near Herefordshire,

Dyfed SA6 5JE.

November 21

The 231 year old British Linen Bank yesterday went back to work.

Founded by Royal Charter in 1746

On 30th November 1977 the merchant banking operations, assets and whole undertaking of Bank of Scotland Finance Company Limited—already Scotland's largest merchant bank—were transferred to

The British Linen Bank Limited.

We are pleased to announce the revival of this respected bank which has financed trade and supported industry for more than two centuries.

Acceptances

Term Loans

Direct Investment

Corporate Finance

Deposits

Leasing

Governor: Thomas N. Risk, B.L.
Deputy Governor: Thomas W. Walker, C.B.E., B.L.
Chief Executive: D. Bruce Patullo, B.A.
Secretary: Joan Smith, M.A., L.L.B., Ph.D., Advocate

THE BRITISH LINEN BANK LIMITED
The Merchant Bank of the Bank of Scotland Group.

4 Mcville Street, Edinburgh EH3 7NZ 031-226 4071 87 St Vincent Street, Glasgow G2 5TJ 041-221 6692

كلاً من الأطراف

BY THE FINANCIAL EDITOR

Calm returns to the money markets

There are those around financial markets to whom it seems that the monetary authorities can do nothing right. Had the authorities, it is argued, pushed for the MLR increase the week after the sterling float, everything in the garden would now be looking if not entirely rosy, at least rosier than it is. Markets could have been rapidly converted to the idea that the main monetary consideration had changed as from October 31 to one of overseas supply effects to those of domestic demand effects and, with the authorities apparently well on top of the situation, the smooth continuation of the public sector funding programme would not have been put at risk.

Whether things would have gone quite so smoothly could be open to doubt. But, right or wrong, the fact remains that the authorities do not appear to be in the happiest of positions at the moment.

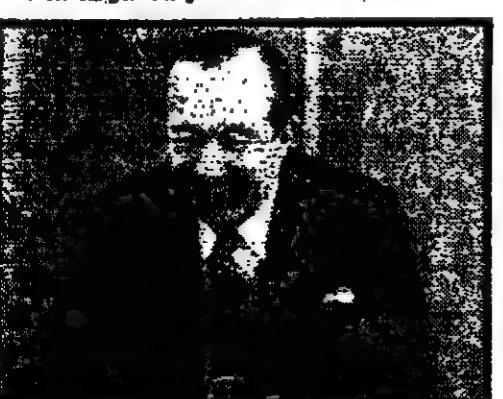
Yesterday's move by the Bank to "communicate" with the market was the right one given the confusion and uncertainty that was building up, and the stabilizing effect of the announcement was plain to see. But the market remains uneasy about the authorities' ability to resume the funding programme on any scale for the moment.

As I have already pointed out this week, the temporary run-down in institutional liquidity is one factor. But, equally important, of course, is the confidence factor. If the market believes that gilts will be bought, then money supply fears evaporate, the whole process becomes self-feeding and there is no need to raise interest rates further. If, on the other hand, it believes that too many investors are worried about what may happen to the money supply, the situation becomes deadlocked.

The hope at the moment is that nerves can be calmed sufficiently to ease that deadlock and here the news background could well prove critical over the next few days. If things go the wrong way, the authorities would then have to reconsider their position, either in terms of the price of money, or, much against their will, quantitative restrictions on the banks. One sadness, meanwhile, is that the instrument designed to help cope with this kind of situation, namely the floating rate gilt, is clearly not able to fulfil its intended role.

Rothmans Increasing market share

Rothmans International is now claiming to have won a 10 per cent share of the United Kingdom cigarette market, which compares with only 7.6 per cent last year and 6.9 per cent in 1975. During approximately the same period Imperial Group, the market leader, has boosted its share of the King Size market from 11 per cent to around 40 per cent, but its gains look more and more to have been at the expense of its own cheaper, smaller brands, which have dominated the United Kingdom market, but which are increasingly threatened by the change in tax treatment favouring larger sizes coming into effect with EEC harmonization on January 1.



Sir David Nicolson, chairman of Rothmans International.

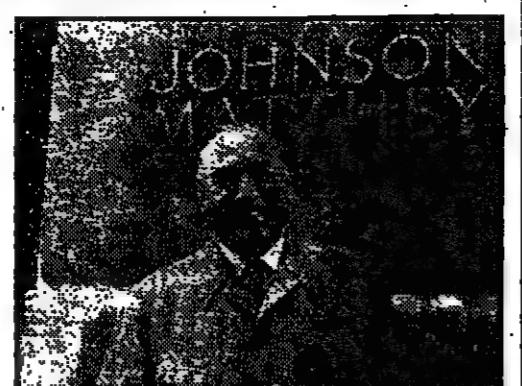
The cost to Rothmans has been an apparent fall in United Kingdom profits despite healthy gains in exports. The potential, however, is clearly seen as being very great indeed. Rothmans is able to compete with Imperial's dominance (a 66 per cent total market share in 1976) only because of its strength elsewhere in Europe and burgeoning third world and Middle East sales which helped six months profits to September to rise 30 per cent to £38m.

A general switch to King Size, where it is strong, has given Rothmans the chance to attack Imperial's market strength. Any idea that the price-cutting and marketing war will stop in January when margins would otherwise rise as the new tax laws come into effect, looks increasingly unlikely. The prize is to grab a bigger slice of a market in which sales growth by any other means is extremely slow. Such chances come rarely

and Rothmans is likely to face, in the New Year, increased competition from BAT, whose presence in the United Kingdom so far is very small, with its State Express 555 brand, and possibly from Philip Morris.

Such competition is bound to draw in both Imperial and Gallaher, which could make the immediate future profits potential in the United Kingdom fairly grim. Rothmans meanwhile is having problems holding market share in Germany, although holding up for declining cigarette sales with hand-rolled tobacco, and is facing the prospect of keener margins as a result of a higher price.

Second-half profits are not expected to improve on the same period last year and in the short-term the best growth has now passed. The shares, though, have overperformed the market by about 15 per cent since January and the sector by about twice that. At 52p the prospective yield is 5.9 per cent and without any promise of a dividend increase on the relaxation of restrictions the shares look fairly valued.



Johnson Matthey whose chairman is Lord Robens (above), seems to be clearing the decks for the ending of dividend controls. Its interim payment is raised by 20 per cent to 9.25p a share, which would allow only a minor increase in the final payment under the existing rules.

Meanwhile profits in the second quarter were virtually static but that was hardly surprising given sluggish industrial demand, a point underlined by results from people like ICI, GKN and Metal Box. Thus, the first quarter's 17 per cent profit increase has been cut to a little under 10 per cent at the interim stage, while margins reversed the first quarter trend and declined.

The banking side has felt the effect of low interest rates, it has been seeing good business in the gold bullion market which is volatile at present. While the Rustenburg increase in platinum prices will provide JM with higher commission profits for the remainder of the year, the economic climate means that profit estimates have been downgraded since the beginning of the year. A modest increase to £25m in pre-tax profits seems in sight, which puts the shares at 45p on a prospective p/e ratio of 6.6, yielding 4 per cent on a five times covered dividend.

Company secretaries In search of greater status

Under law every company must have a company secretary. That said, anyone can become one, a point not lost on the Institute of Chartered Secretaries & Administrators which apparently went through the Stock Exchange Year Book and found that even among listed companies the secretary invariably did not claim any qualification.

Yet the company secretary has clear responsibilities under law; the institute says that there are over 90 instances in which incorrect performance of duties by a company secretary could result in criminal proceedings; the secretary is seen as the guardian of law within the company. Against this background and growing demands for a high level of competence and integrity from company officers, the institute is pushing for statutory recognition for company secretaries; a Private Member's Bill will be sponsored towards this by Mr John Cockcroft, the Conservative MP for Nantwich.

In future, the institute wants to see all company secretaries, but initially those employed in listed companies, holding some recognized accountancy or legal qualification, though naturally, it says that its own broadly-based qualification which leads initially to becoming a licentiate of the institute is the best available. Since it involves papers in economics, finance, law, accountancy, personnel, administration and management, it assumes that the company secretary has to be something of an expert in many fields—someone who is a little tired, perhaps, of being taken for granted.

Business Diary: A CBI for the professions?

Members of the British professions are going in for one of their periodical fits of self-questioning about their inability to organize themselves into a general version of the TUC or the CPS.

A week today Alan Strachan, immediate past chairman of the members' affairs standing committee of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, will deliver an address in London on the need for some such organization.

The council of the Law Society, the solicitors' body is known to be considering how best the British professions might secure a better hearing in Brussels—or, for that matter, Westminster.

One way likely to be discussed is affiliation to a body recognized by the EEC's Economic and Social Committee. Such a body is the Brussels-based European Secretariats of Liberal Intellectual and Social Professions (SEPLIS), hitherto dominated by French and Belgian professionals.

SEPLIS, however, prefers its members to be groups of associations, which takes us back to the question: to combine or not to combine? The Irish Republic has had a Federation of Professional Associations for ten years.

The Law Society council has

before it a broadly favourable report on SEPLIS from Stanley Crossick, who sat at a recent meeting as a representative of the EEC's Consultative Committee of Bar and Law Societies.

Whether the surveyors and the solicitors can agree among themselves, let alone with anybody else, remains to be seen. No such move is likely to get far without the blessing of doctors of one stripe or another, who have blocked previous initiatives either, because they look down on other and newer professions or because they think that inter-professional groupings are inimical to their traditions of independence.

But while British professionals, like Brussels' bureaucrats are steadily rehashing the boundaries between one discipline and another and dreaming up harmonization measures not at all to British tastes.

June Evans, a British member of the EEC's Economic and Social Committee specializing in professional matters, joked in London last week that the Brussels' watchword was: "If it moves, put a regulation on it; if it stands still, harmonize."

Most of the jumbos arrive from the United States between 6.30 am and 10.30 am so that air passengers taking the tube into London early in the morning.

For a bargain 80p and in

before December 16 be able to commute from the centre of Heathrow Airport, London, to Piccadilly by way of an extension of the London Underground.

The extension, which is to be opened by the Queen, will be 31 years and seven months coming (the Minister of Aviation said in 1946 when opening Heathrow, that priority had to be given to a tube line).

At first sight it looks like being a boon to the flying executive. But will it really be worth changing travel patterns?

The journey between Heathrow and Piccadilly has 18 stops, which is a lot, but probably less than would be made by a car or taxi at traffic lights over the same route.

The first train on weekdays arrives at the airport at 6.30 am and the last leaves at 10 minutes to midnight. There are no trains through the night, but the airport closes down under a noise curfew anyway.

So far so good, but there could be a big snag when travelling into London early in the morning.

Swan Hunter shipyard workers may stick to their overtime ban, but Phil Evans's work-

Can Whitehall handle the pension fund monster?

Maurice Corrigan

reports on

the problems

generated by the

£1,920m actuarial

deficiency in

the Post Office

Staff Superannuation

Scheme

The Government will soon deliver its reply to the report submitted in the summer by Professor Charles Carter, chairman of the Whitehall-appointed Post Office Review Committee. While attention will be concentrated on the case for splitting the corporation into two distinct and separately directed businesses, probably the most intriguing part of the reply will concern the Post Office Staff Superannuation Scheme and its £1,920m actuarial deficiency.

Payments (which fall on customers) to make up on the deficiency are creating an investment monster while Whitehall and the Post Office wrangle about the causes of the paper deficit.

Even before last year's actuarial valuation, which raised the deficiency from £1,092m to £1,920m (so raising the sum due to the fund from the Post Office under its 20-year scheme for eliminating deficits), it was estimated that by March 1985, the fund could have over £3,000m to invest.

Some idea of this colossal sum can be gained if it is measured against a figure of just under £30m only six years ago, when it was established as a contributory scheme.

The Carter committee's views on what it called the confused and sorry story of the pension fund did not, at the time of publication, attract much scrutiny given public interest. In other words, Post Office staff, they deserve a full Whitehall report before the dimensions of the emerging problem—creating a fund so large that it may become impossible to manage properly—become a matter of major public concern.

Customers of the Post Office are at present saddled with paying in prices towards current pensions, for deficits clearly resulting from the

fact that each year the actuary reviews the rate of deficiency contribution to ensure that it meets the target of liquidation in the 20 years from April 1, 1972. The effect is to place a constant heavy charge on the profit and loss account.

Representatives to the Government for a contribution have so far gone unheeded. Yet there is no doubt that the Post Office has a strong case given the calculation of notional liabilities on a highly dubious basis for the years prior to the establishment of the corporation.

The Carter committee has made a recommendation that the hopeless task of making good the deficiency as at present assessed should be abandoned. Instead, it has urged acceptance of the principle that Post Office users in each year pay the pensions attributable to the workforce as an annual rate subject to a smoothing arrangement tied to what is described as a partial fund sufficient to protect pensions in all circumstances (including a big contraction in business).

The basis of the partial fund would be the existing superannuation fund augmented by rearrangement of the Post Office balance sheet, which would incorporate a big slice of the deficiency as an unfunded liability to the fund.

This would be done by writing up assets to current value with one eye on the fact that, originally, the corporation advantageously took over its valuable assets at historic cost.

The deficiency payments have to be found over and above the present employers' contribution of 17 per cent of pensionable pay, previously 15 per cent.

The constant headache for the Post Office—a problem now to be faced by its new board, which includes employee representatives—is

Portaventure and Hunterston, when existing yards with a proven record and settled workforce urgently want orders. The concrete yards at Loch Kishorn and Ardye Point are in this position.

The only field in the least likely to require a deep-water concrete structure is the BP Magnus which is in stormy seas on the same latitude as the Faroes. The company is understood to be looking closely into the possibility of using a sub-sea system less exposed to the fierce weather and is claimed to be cheaper to build.

Hunterston is perhaps in a better position than Portaventure. The dock, which has been reclaimed from mud flats, borders the extremely deep waters of the Firth of Clyde and there are a number of possible uses in connection with neighbouring industry.

Although the British Steel Corporation has indicated that there is no specific short-term use for the dock, the land it occupies could prove very useful in future.

Portaventure is in a more difficult situation. With hindsight it is easy to say that the decision to develop the yard ahead of an order was too precipitate, but the Government was working on the best estimates of likely requirements and three orders had already been lost to overseas yards because Britain lacked proper facilities to build massive concrete platforms.

The lease by Sea Platform Constructors expired almost a year ago and talks have taken place with Mowlem and Taylor Woodrow, the consortium which had sought to develop Drumhead, but the likely future of the market decided them against going ahead with the alterations to Portaventure to take their own design of platform. The yard had already been hampered in bidding for contracts for not having a tried and tested design.

Since development of the North Sea began, some 30 steel and concrete platforms have been built or ordered for the British fields and markets overseas, but the initial promising rush of activity in the early seventies dried up.

It is now thought that the Government would feel it unwise to channel orders to

Portaventure and Hunterston further down the line of development points. Portaventure is geographically remote and will be unlikely to rank as a serious competitor in the oilfield maintenance market since the yards are more conveniently located.

To many it would seem that there is only one alternative and that is to turn the empty workers' homes into a holiday village, the sports centre into a leisure centre and instead of giant concrete platforms Portaventure could welcome a large, fee-paying fleet of pleasure craft.

Ronald Faux

Economic notebook

Now you see it, now you don't

By a statistician's sleight of hand the financial health of Britain's industrial and commercial companies could look about £600m worse than it does at present. The same accounting change would probably make industry look considerably better off in the 1980s.

British industry's net acquisition of financial assets (NAFA) is an increasingly popular measure of the financial health of industrial and commercial companies. Although in many other countries a large company borrowing requirement is considered bullish, this is not the case in Britain.

The first improvement would be to exclude unremitted profits from the measure of industrial companies' financial position. The effect of this change would become much more favourable over the next few years as foreign oil investments build up.

Caroline Atkin, in

Where do payments deficits come from?

The obvious and the right answer is that they come from the fact that some other country has an equivalent payments surplus, but one would never be able to deduce this obvious fact from the figures for the current account in 1978 which

A comparison of current account payments (in £000m) for 1978

Country	OECD	NIEBR
US	-21	-15.9
UK	4	3.9
Canada	-5	-5
Japan	10	17.1
France	-2	5
Germany	3	-0.1
Italy	1.5	8.4
Total OECD	-25	-7.1
Non-oil developing	-33	-29.8
Opec	35	35.7
Other	-11	1.2
Total	-34	0

The OECD total includes figures for countries other than those listed.

seem to have caused rather a stir last week in the Working Party Three of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

If one adds up the individual deficit and surplus figures (the OECD figures are comparable to those of the National Institute of Economic and Social Research in the table) a strange fact emerges. This is that the world as a whole will have a current account deficit next year of around £34,000m.

More worryingly, things are getting worse; the global deficit was only around \$23,000m this year, and it used to be \$33,000m or less. The truth is, of course, that we are not building up a huge deficit with Marc but the figures are wrong.

A combination of growth of unrecorded trade (notably arms exports) and other items is distorting the figures out of all recognition. But until we come to terms with the new system this is an inaccurate picture of the current account of the balance of payments, but the real result is a less competitive British industry and vacant platform sites.

All of which puts Portaventure and Hunterston further down the line of development points. Portaventure is geographically remote and will be unlikely to rank as a serious competitor in the oilfield maintenance market since the yards are more conveniently located.

To many it would seem that there is only one alternative and that is to turn the empty workers' homes into a holiday village, the sports centre into a leisure centre and instead of giant concrete platforms Portaventure could welcome a large, fee-paying fleet of pleasure craft.

David Blake

STOCKLAKE HOLDINGS LIMITED

Exporters and distributors overseas, export financiers, steel stockholders, importers

Principal U.K. Subsidiaries:

Adam & Harvey Limited
B. Ashworth & Co. (Overseas) Limited

Results for the year ended 31st March 1977

- ▷ Total Group profit before tax, including share of profit of an associated company, £1,449,000 (1976—£1,092,000).
- ▷ Earnings per Ordinary Stock Unit of 25p before extraordinary items: 19.7p (1976—12.4p).
- ▷ Increased Final Dividend of 1.81658p per Ordinary Stock Unit (1976—1.5p) making 2.56658p for the year (1976—2.25p).

In his Statement, the Chairman, Major-General A. M. McKay, C.B., C.Eng., comments on the substantial profits growth achieved against a background of persistently difficult trading conditions both in the U.K. and abroad. In the current year the Company has continued to trade profitably and indications are that this year's results will be reasonably satisfactory.

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Hall No. 3, Winchester House, 100 Old Broad Street, London EC2 on Thursday, 22nd December 1977 at 12 noon.

Copies of the Report and Accounts are available from the Secretary, King's House, 36-37 King Street, London EC2V 8DR.



Confidence for the future

Highlights from the Statement by the Chairman, Sir Gerald Thorley, T.D., F.R.I.C.S., for the year ended 30th September, 1977.

SUMMARY OF GROUP REVENUE (in £'000's)

	1977	1976
Gross revenue	61,330	58,300
Revenue before taxation	8,972	5,460
Taxation	4,847	3,903
Earnings attributable to ordinary shareholders	2,236	—981
NET DIVIDEND per share	1.7p	0.1p

FINANCE

Since 1974 the Group's principal financial priority has been to reduce its overall level of borrowings, particularly secured loans and loans denominated in currencies other than sterling. Overall, the loan capital of the Group has been reduced during the past year from £12.7m to £11.6m. Of this amount, £2.2m is attributable to the sale of MEPC Canada, £1.1m to net repayments in the UK and £1.2m in the US. It should be noted that both secured loans and also currency loans have fallen from just over 60% to just under 50% of the loan capital of the Group.

In addition to our continuing policy of reducing debt it has also proved possible to re-finance a number of large loans which became due for repayment during the past year.

The improvement in sterling during the year gave rise to a loss of £1.2m on conversion of our overseas assets for Balance Sheet purposes into sterling. A large part of this loss related to our Canadian subsidiary. It should be noted, however, that an improvement in sterling relative to foreign currencies favourably affects the Balance Sheet by reducing debt and the Revenue Account by reducing interest payments.

Contractual commitments have been reduced during the year from £29.5m to £16.8m of which £6.9m relates to Exchange Centre, Sydney. The reduction in contractual commitments has been achieved by the completion of our major developments in Hawaii, Birmingham and Frankfurt, by the sale of our Canadian subsidiary and also as a result of the progress made on Exchange Centre. We now intend to commence two major developments and one large refurbishment in the UK, the financing of which will be comfortably within the Company's resources.

We are conscious of the need to control the extent of our development programme to ensure that the simultaneous development of a number of sites does not bring with it the attendant risk which could arise from any downturn in the demand for space.

Residential Developments

Last year I said that we needed to achieve another £5m of sales to close the operations of MEPC Housing Ltd. and J. Sanders & Son (Holdings) Ltd. I am glad to tell you that we have reduced our holding in these subsidiaries to around £1m without having to make further provisions.

VALUATION OF PROPERTIES

The income earning part of the investment portfolio has been valued on the basis of open market value and it is our intention in the future to revalue this portfolio annually. The result of the valuation was a surplus over net book value attributable to MEPC of £6.6m which has been incorporated in the Balance Sheet.

This year we have been able to review our uncompleted development sites by reference to their value at completion and have made provisions in respect of certain of them, totalling £3.8m. The uplift in value expected from other sites and developments in progress has been disregarded.

Copies of the 1977 Annual Report and Accounts will be available from December 20th. If you would like to receive a copy, please write to the Company Secretary, MEPC Limited, Bank House, 112 Park Lane, London W1Y 4AY.

FINANCIAL NEWS AND MARKET REPORTS

Stock markets

About turn as the optimists come back on Bank's MLR signal

Bearish indications from Wall Street and continued interest rate jitters prompted widespread marking down soon after the opening yesterday.

However, the luncheon signal from the Bank of England that MLR should rise no further in the short-term prompted a quick about-turn that prompted dealers to start talking of a firm run-up to Christmas.

On the whole these optimists seemed to get the better of the pessimists who were still keeping one eye on the pay disputes and both equities and gilts managed to close with net gains.

But the feeling is now that more substantial backing is needed for the rally. Yesterday's movements were largely technical with business abysmally low throughout the equity market.

Gilts did show a certain amount of activity. Jobbers

Pilkington Brothers shares at 43p are splendidly firm ahead of interim figures due soon. Indeed they jumped 13p on Tuesday, more than recovering ground lost earlier. But the yield is a meagre 3.3 per cent and profits in the half year to September 30 may have risen only modestly from £27.6m to say, £30m or a bit more. If so, the shares' strength could be tested.

Enclosed at overnight prices that drifted back until the signal from the Bank when the stocks rallied strongly to score gains of up to a point in the shorts and a quarter in the longs.

Interest rate uncertainty was also dominating property shares early on but the signal plus good final results from MEPC fuelled a strong rally. MEPC

itself closed 4p up at 118p while Land Securities gained 3p to 198p.

Industrial leaders mirrored the progress of gilts and finished at their best with ICI up 5p to 363p, Btcham up 7p to 325p and Fisons up 2p to 37.5p.

In engineering GKN followed suit with a gain of 6p to 284p and in the same sector speculative takeover talk continued to push John Brown ahead with a 5p gain to 258p.

All the excitement over base rates has had remarkably little effect on a quiet banks sector though Barclays showed some movement during the day as their board decision on rates was awaited and the share closed a penny up at 325p. Williams & Glyn's made its base rate announcement and the parent company National and Commercial Banking Group whose results are due today, lost a penny to 70p.

In electricals Racal slipped sharply ahead of today's interim figures only to recover

itself closed unchanged at 207p. EMI with support from a broker's circular rose 6p to 216p.

Results are also due today from BP and the old shares added 2p to 920p in anticipation while the old lost 5p to 375p as the final call date approached. Oil Exploration ran into strong speculative demand and added 20p to 322p.

On the special situations front Allied Polymer, recently mentioned here, rose 5p to 36p before being suspended in bid talks with BTA. Reed & Smith returned from a suspension price of 35p to 38p on announcement of a £10m St Regis and Yarwood added 7p to 280p on hopes of a good nationalization compensation deal.

Shares were firm on bullish indications from the National Institute on consumer spending and British Home Stores added 7p to 227p while W. H. Smith rose 7p to 760p. Boosted dividends offset

bearish trading forecasts from Avon Rubber to push the shares up 6p to 176p while better than expected figures from Rothmans were accom-

panied by a less than bullish statement and the shares lost 4p to 52p.

Equity turnover on November 29 was £56.5m (12,894 bargains). According to Exchange Telegraph active stocks yesterday were BP parley paid, ICI Oil Exploration, Shell, BE old, GUS, Btcham, Racal, Spen, BATS, Racal, Rank Organisation, Reed, International and Distillers.



The British Petroleum Company Limited £1 Ordinary Stock Units

Offer for Sale by the Bank of England on behalf of H.M. Government

Final Instalment Due 6th December 1977

The Bank of England wish to remind holders of Letters of Acceptance that the final instalment of £5.45 per £1 Stock unit MUST BE PAID BY 3 P.M. ON 6TH DECEMBER. Cheques for the amounts due, made payable to the Bank of England and crossed "Not negotiable - BP Stock" must be forwarded, with the LETTERS OF ACCEPTANCE, to the APPROPRIATE RECEIVING BANK whose name and address appears in the box on the right-hand side of page 1 of the Letters of Acceptance.

Registration of Renunciation

The attention of holders of renounced Letters of Acceptance, i.e., those with Form X completed or marked "Original duly renounced", is drawn to Instruction 5 on page 3 of the Letter; it is essential that both Declaration (A) — where appropriate — and Declaration (B) at the foot of page 4 are signed before fully paid Letters are lodged for registration of renunciation on or before 1st December.

Lake & Elliot, Ltd.

VALVES, STEEL CASTINGS ENGINEERING

EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st July, 1977

	1977	1976
Group Turnover	£18,247m	£18,290m
Group Trading Profit	£1,121m.	£2,027m
Earnings per Ordinary Share		
—before extraordinary item	4.44p	10.62p
—after extraordinary item	2.58p	10.62p
Ordinary Dividend	3.4914p	3.4385p

"Although the long term market prospects remain obscure, there has recently been a considerable improvement in the order position, the effect of which should be felt in the second half year. The Company, therefore, having taken drastic action to recover its momentum, faces the future with confidence tempered with prudence".

Peter Lake, Chairman

Copies of the Report and Accounts are available from the Secretary, Middlesex House, 29 High Street, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 7HR

Bank Leumi Base Rate

Bank Leumi (U.K.) Ltd. announces that, with effect from Wednesday, November 30th, 1977, its Base Rate for lending is increased from 6% to 7 1/4%.

The rate of interest on 7-day notice Deposit accounts on sums below £1,000 is increased to 4 1/4%. For larger amounts interest rates will be quoted on application.



BANK LEUMI (U.K.) LTD.

Registered Office: 4-7 Woodstock Street, London W1A 2AF
Telephone: 01-629 1205

KCA International

As announced with the Company results and following approval by shareholders

Berry Wiggins & Co. Limited has been renamed

KCA International Limited

The Company Head Office remains at: 9th Floor, Berkeley Square House, Berkeley Square, London W1X 6BY and the Registered Office at: Kingnorth-on-the-Medway, Hoo, Rochester, Kent ME3 8ND.

محل امن الامان

FINANCIAL NEWS

Asset growth at Cumulus tops sector average

By Alison Mitchell

Cumulus Investment Trust is a company with its feet firmly on the ground. In the year to September 30 last, the net asset value a share rose 57 per cent to 42p, against a sector average of around 27 per cent.

Pre-tax revenue more than doubled in the period from a previous £25.7m to £56.3m partly as a result of the two subsidiary companies turning in better performances. The income from the investment trust itself also increased, according to Mr John Smith, chairman.

During the year its offshore Cumulus Systems moved from Nottingham to London and the subsequent expense and disruption hit profits from this side. However, the chairman forecasts an improvement in the current year and adds: "We promise shareholders that the group will attempt to hold profits on this side from £8,000 to a minimum of £12,500."

Cumulus Systems has developed various computer programmes for financial management which show considerable promise.

During the year the company repaid in £700,000 loans and has reduced its holdings in the United States to less than 3 per cent of the £2.4m portfolio.

At the time of the repayment the investments were worth more than the loan.

The dividends have been raised from 1.21p to 1.21p which on a share price of 62p, which has held steady at 25p, gives a gross yield of 4.7 per cent.

Meanwhile Lord Dartmouth, chairman of Scottish Cities Investment Trust, expects a further increase in dividend income from investment in the current 12 months to September 30 next. However, he tells shareholders in the annual report that this improvement will be partly offset by the reduction in interest rates.

£5m loan for Argos as profits soar

Coinciding with the announcement of record turnover and profits for the year ended November 5, 1977, for Argos catalogue showrooms, its joint managing director, Mr Joe Phillips, gave details of a £5-million loan by Barclays Bank to finance the next stage of the company's new showroom development plan.

He said that Argos would have an estimated profit of some £750,000 on a £5-million turnover for 1976-77, after

Avon Rubber slows sharply but more-than-doubles total

By Our Financial Staff

Avon Rubber's recovery rate slowed significantly in the second half just as the group had "predicted" at the interim stage.

Even so profits continued to move ahead at a rate of around 50 per cent to provide a more-than-doubled total of £5.4m for the full year to October 1.

The swift return to record profits after the losses of more than £500,000 is celebrated with an 80 per cent dividend boost.

Shareholders' payments were cut back in 1975 and the group has now obtained Treasury permission to restore them to the earlier levels and add the 10 per cent maximum.

A final payment of 7.99p gross takes the total to 14.05p gross against the 7.89p of last year.

Shares of the Wiltshire-based tyres and industrial products group, jumped 5p to 17.6p yesterday despite some fairly pessimistic comments about current trading from the directors.

During the first two months



Mr. H. C. I. Rogers, chairman of the current financial year, they say Avon has experienced increased competition in the tyre business. This is expected to continue into 1978.

At the same time continued

disruption of production schedules through industrial disputes in the car industry make any forecast for the full year particularly difficult.

But the group says that its increasing efficiency and broader base should enable them to maintain the trend of improving profits.

This year's pre-tax profit is struck after a depreciation charge of £2.3m against £1.9m and a consolidation of £115,255 against under £6,000 from associate companies.

Total turnover was 23 per cent ahead at 108m.

The group's decision not to provide for deferred tax resulting in a charge this time of under 14 per cent gear up the attributable profits improvement. As a result earnings per share jump from 27.5p to 68.4p.

Avon Rubber has remained on a strong recovery track since it became one of the worst casualties of the United Kingdom car industry downturn

two years ago.

During the first two months

Rights issue and bumper results from Kenning

By Tony May

Kenning Motor Group, one of the country's biggest British Leyland distributors, and hire fleets, plans to raise £3.8m by a one-for-four rights issue. At the same time it estimates that pre-tax profits for the year to end September 30, up 43 per cent.

The news clipped 1p from the share price to leave it at 76p compared with the rights price of 62p. Mr George Kenning, the chairman, notes that the group last made a rights issue to raise £3m, in 1975 when profit stood at £1.8m.

Once again the group is spending the money on expansion and also to keep a good balance between shareholders' funds and borrowings.

Loan shareholders will be offered the issue at 62p on the basis of one share for every £2.80 of loan stock held.

Commenting on the £7m profit forecast, Mr Kenning says that it is made after providing £350,000 to fund a small increase in the pensions of retired members, and also make possible future increases in deferred pensions.

The group plans to recommend a gross dividend of 6.28p compared with 5.7p a year ago. The new shares will not rank

More Financial News

on P. 24

Indonesian funding for \$500m

Jakarta — Bank Indonesia confirms that negotiations are advanced for a \$500m replacement financing loan for the Republic of Indonesia, acting through Bank Indonesia, the central bank.

An interim dividend of 4.03p gross is declared, costing a total £223,508, a 10 per cent gain, the maximum permitted under the counter-inflation legislation, on the 3.6p gross paid last year.

Because of the change in income tax rates shareholders will also be getting a net 0.08282p a share for last year, leaving last year's dividend in the total permitted gross distribution.

Alfred Dunhill is 51 per cent owned by Robinson International whose half-year results were also produced yesterday.

The figures for this half-year include the results of Mont-Blanc-Simples, a West German pen-making company, in which Dunhill bought a 50 per cent

for the final dividend of 4p gross, but will qualify for subsequent payments.

Mr Kenning notes that changes in the scope of the business mean that 76 per cent of profits for the year came from activities other than the motor depots.

Referring to the group's continuing improvements in the Republic of Indonesia's balance of payments and foreign exchange reserves, Bank Indonesia has decided it would be appropriate to replace these funds by a new loan.

The terms and conditions would reflect the present economic and financial strength of the Republic.

The amount outstanding under the two existing loans will be reduced from \$550m to \$750m as a result of scheduled amortisation. By the date of the replacement financing in March, 1978, the outstanding loans will, in the course of normal amortisation, be further reduced to \$670m.

A result of British Leyland's rationalisation of the franchise structure will be that the group will be able to obtain new franchises to rise.

Mr. G. Richardson has succeeded Mr. J. G. Richardson as chairman of Trentham Metals, Aspinwall Mines, Malaysia, Ayer Hitam Tin Dredging, Ayer Hitam Tin Dredging, Malaysia, Sungai Red Mines, Sungai Red Mines, Malaysia and Southern Trough Tin Dredging. Mr. Richardson remains a director.

Mr. G. J. Jordan and Mr. John Sibbord have joined the board of Aveling Marshall.

Mr. Nicholas Cosh is now on the board of Chatterhouse Japeth, Mr. David Roberts and Mr. Peter Williams have been made directors of Chatterhouse Petroleum Development.

Mr. A. S. Stokes has been made a director of A. E. Edmunds.

Mr. Peter Brabrook and Mr. Peter Scott have become directors of Oxley Printing Group.

MEPC reinstates its dividend after 64 pc jump to near-£9m

By Richard Allen

MEPC's reputation as one of the best recovery stocks in the sector was further enhanced by news of a 64 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to just under £2m in the year to September 30.

The figure is struck after a £5.2m transfer from reserves to cover outgoings on development properties and a much reduced £482,000 transfer for the Discovery Bay housing development, was above market estimates.

News of an interim and total dividend of 2.58p gross after two fallow years provided a source for further enthusiasm and this has thrown up a new source of uncompleted sites and developments.

Net assets per share as a result are shown at 168p.

the early 1970s MEPC at last managed to stabilize its financial position. Borrowings have been reduced from last year's £421m to £316m with £22m of the reduction being directly attributable to the recent sale of MEPC Canada.

A further £10m is due to net repayments in the United Kingdom and £12m in the United States due chiefly to sales of Discovery Bay Apartments.

Meanwhile the group has taken advantage of better conditions to carry out a revaluation of properties on the more cautious open market basis and this has thrown up a new source of uncompleted sites and developments.

Contractual commitments in the meantime have been reduced from £29.5m to £16.8m, of which just under £7m relates to the Exchange Centre in Sydney.

Sales of investment properties in the United Kingdom have realized £12.7m and Mr. Gerald Thorley, chairman, says that the target of sales for the current year has already been met.

The massive development portfolio is expected to continue providing a drag on profitability but there have been signs that conditions are at least stabilizing. During 1978 the group expects that pre-leasing and funding requirements will be met to enable starting major developments in Guildford and Oxford Street.

Contractual commitments in the meantime have been reduced from £29.5m to £16.8m, of which just under £7m relates to the Exchange Centre in Sydney.

Business appointments

New chief at Bemrose Corporation

Mr Gordon Brunton, managing director and chief executive of The Thomson Organisation is to succeed Sir Max Matherne as non-executive chairman of Bemrose Corporation when he retires in May. Sir Max will remain on the board as non-executive director.

Alan Miller has become chairman of The London & Bemrose Group, succeeding Mr. Ian Low, who has retired from the board.

Professor Sir Hermann Bondi is to chair the Department of Energy's Office of Energy Technology Board. He is also scientific director of the Department of Energy.

Mr. J. C. Price, managing director of Dutton Holdings, has joined the Industrial Development Advisory Board.

Mr. Guy Talbot has been made a director of SMC United Kingdom.

Mr. J. J. Potter has become non-executive director of Adi and Lacy.

Eric Junus Sudin has succeeded Mr. J. G. Richardson as chairman of Trentham Metals, Aspinwall Mines, Malaysia, Ayer Hitam Tin Dredging, Ayer Hitam Tin Dredging, Malaysia, Sungai Red Mines, Sungai Red Mines, Malaysia and Southern Trough Tin Dredging. Mr. Richardson remains a director.

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Mr. Peter Brabrook and Mr. Peter Scott have become directors of Oxley Printing Group.

Mail-order setback at CGA

in spite of turnover

at the position and the group's management director has taken control of the trading section to rectify matters.

The group is also installing a computer. Although this increases costs in the current year, the benefits will start to accrue next year.

The trading section supplies goods for the garden, house, estate, farm and members' personal use on a discount basis.

BASE RATE

With effect from the close of business on 1st December 1977

and until further notice TSB Base Lending Rate will be

7%

per annum

TSB

Trustee Savings Banks Central Board, P.O. Box 99, 3 Gracechurch Street, London EC3P 3BX

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Syndicated loans

Authorised and paid up capital: £15 million

Allied Arab Bank Ltd

Cunard House, 88 Leadenhall Street,

London EC3A 3DR

Telephone: 01-283 9111

Telex: 886959

Stock Exchange Prices Early losses reversed

ACCOUNT DAYS: Dealings Begin, Nov 28. Dealings End, Dec 9. § Contango Day, Dec 12. Settlement Day, Dec 20

§ Forward bargains are permitted on two previous days

The logo for Henry Butcher & Co. is enclosed in a black rectangular border. The company name 'Henry Butcher & Co' is written in a large, bold, black serif font, with 'incorporating' in a smaller font above 'Leopold Farmer & Sons'. Below the main name is the text 'Agents, Valuers and Surveyors'. To the right of the main name, 'Property & Plant' is written in a large, bold, black serif font. At the bottom, the cities 'London-Leeds-Birmingham' are listed in a large, bold, black serif font.

Agents, Valuers and Surveyors

Property & Plant

London-Leeds-Birmingham

FINANCIAL NEWS

Strong start made by Deutsche Bank

There are growing signs that 1977 will turn out to be another excellent year for West Germany's banks with some observers already forecasting higher profits than in the record year of 1975.

Deutsche Bank, the country's largest private bank, reports that profits from ordinary operations rose by about one fifth in the first 10 months of this year when compared with tenfold its monthly average earnings in 1976.

In an interim report the bank disclosed that earnings from commission business and from borrowing and lending activities rose by 12.3 per cent to DM2.087m in the 10 months to the end of October, while expenditure on administration increased by only 6.9 per cent to DM1.583m.

The bank added that it also achieved good results through trading on its own account although lower foreign exchange earnings had to be set against higher profits made on securities transactions.

The bank said that after a slow start its volume of business had expanded strongly since the middle of the year to stand at DM70.349m at the end of October, or 3.8 per cent higher than those in the year ended June 30 on sales of DM67.938m of end-December last year.

The bank's average business volume was 13 per cent higher in the January to October period than in the same period of 1976.

Walter Kidde

Walter Kidde & Company, the American diversified and manufacturing concern, plans to offer \$50m (about £27.7m) of 25-year funding debentures in mid-December. The proposed public sale was registered with the Securities & Exchange Commission, a spokesman said. It will be made through underwriters led by Goldman, Sachs & Co. At least 95 per cent of the debentures are expected to be retired prior to final maturity in 2002 by sinking fund payments due to begin in 1983. Walter Kidde has earmarked its sale proceeds for the repayment of short-term debt and other purposes.

Pertec looks ahead

After announcing record profits, Mr Ryal R. Poppa, chairman of Pertec Computer Corporation, the Los Angeles-based manufacturer of computer peripherals and microcomputers, says: "Based on the first half results, we expect sales to approach \$130m (about £72.2m) and earnings to increase in excess of our long-range growth goals."

Pertec Computer Corporation's growth will come primarily from divisions already in place. "But future acquisitions that fit our current product line should not be ruled out," Mr Poppa said.

English Steel deal

British Steel Corporation's subsidiary, the Johannesburg-based English Steel Corporation (Overseas), has agreed to exchange its 40 per cent shareholding in Steel Wheel & Axle South Africa for 200,000 Dorman Long Vandalberg Corporation's ordinary shares. This became effective from October 1 this year, Dorman Long says.

The shares to be issued by Dorman Long, which presently holds 60,000 ordinary shares or 60 per cent of Steel Wheel & Axle, will rank for dividends declared after today. British Steel has a 35 per cent interest in Dorman Long's holding company, International Pipe & Steel Investments South Africa.

International

Hanimex optimistic

Hanimex Corporation of Australia, the photographic equipment group, reports that sales for the first quarter of the current year were 10 per cent higher than those in the same period last year, and the group expects that this rate of increase should continue for the whole of the first half, the chairman, Mr A. W. Uster, told the *Financial Times*. The group had been trading in general he said. But group figures for the six months would be affected by a reduction in international export sales to major customers from the level achieved in the last few months of the last financial year. Hanimex made a consolidated net operating profit of \$A4.7m (about £2.3m) in the year ended June 30 on sales of \$A10.32m.

Sumitomo Bank dips

Sumitomo Bank, one of Japan's largest says that its net profit in the half to September 30 dipped to 8,100m yen (about £17.6m) from 13,800m yen in the similar period a year earlier. This is because it absorbed the largest single write-off in its trading banking history. Otherwise, the bank said its total write-off of claims receivable from the defunct Atsaka & Company trading house amounted to 112,200m yen. Fifteen other Japanese banks also took write-offs during the half-year accounting period on Atsaka's liabilities, totalling 197,800m yen.

Kyowa Bank with the second biggest share in the Atsaka failure wrote off 44,700m yen. It reported net profit in the half-year ended to 4,000m yen from 5,100m yen a year earlier. In October, Atsaka & Company was formally merged with C. Itoh & Company to create the third largest trading concern in Japan.

Fuji Bank uplift

Net profit of Fuji Bank of Japan rose to 15,400m yen in the half-year to end September 30. This was against 13,100m yen a year ago. Current revenues from operation income was 326,800m yen, up against 323,806m yen the dividend was 2.5 yen (same).

Bache halts loss

The Bache Group, Wall Street's largest broker reported a very substantial increase in November gross revenues and October's trading losses have been stopped as a result of the turnaround in the bond market. Mr Harry Jacobs junior says: "Last week Bache reported a loss for the first quarter of fiscal 1978 ended October 31 of 21 cents per share on revenues of \$66.4m (about £36.8m)."

Mitsubishi increase

Mitsubishi Bank of Japan shows a net profit of 15,100m yen (about £3.5m) in its half-year to September 30. This was against 13,100m yen in the same period last year. Revenue from current income was 318,800m yen compared with 304,700m in 1976.

BPM's newspaper side now faring better

A reasonable cheerful picture of the future was painted at the annual meeting in Birmingham by Sir Michael Clapham, chairman of BPA Holdings. He told the shareholders that, on the newspaper side, the Birmingham Post & Mail had had difficulties, but had still done better than in the first four months of last year. All the other newspapers in the group are doing "distinctly" better than last year, as BPA's retailing business, Dillons, Exhibitions, however, have done less well. On balance, the chairman looked for a "rather better year all round".

He also revealed that for 10 weeks this autumn the computer room at Colmore Circus had been crippled by an inter-union dispute about who should operate what. Progress had been made towards its settlement and normal working resumed. But while it was on it meant heavier costs and lower advertising revenue.

ASARCO

Because of continuing losses at the Grand Canyon Mine in British Columbia, Asarco is writing-off its investment in the venture, plus a provision for estimated future costs. This will result in charges against earnings in 1977 of about \$2.3m after tax or \$1.25 a share. -APW-Dow Jones.

GORAL LEISURE

Recent rights issue of 3.07m ordinary shares attracted acceptances for 2.94m shares (95.7 per cent).

AGRICULTURAL MORTGAGE CORPORATION

Corporation's rate of interest for ordinary rate loans will be reduced to 10.25 per cent from December 1, 1977. The lending rate of interest for new variable-rate loans completed on and after December 1, 1977, will also be 10 per cent.

HARTLE MACHINERY

Mr Derek Hartle, chairman of Hartle Machinery International, Manchester, machine tooling group, told annual meetings last month that improved trading climate was encouraging, although it was doubtful whether effects of the expected upturn would be felt in first six months.

PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES

IN PARLIAMENT, SESSION 1977-78

BRITISH RAILWAYS

Notice is hereby given that APPLICATION is being made to Parliament in respect of the following Bill:

1. A railway 22,370 metres in length, commencing in the parish of Northowton and terminating in the district of Selby in the county of North Yorkshire:

2. A railway 1,060 metres in length, commencing in the parish of Temple Hirst, Chapel Haddiley, Burn, Gatafold, Hambledon, Wistow, Cawood, Stainforth, and the parish of Thorne, and terminating in the parish of Appleton Roebuck and terminating in the parish of Coton:

3. A railway 1,060 metres in length, partly in the parish of Thorne, Wheldrake and partly in the parish of Coton:

4. A railway 1,060 metres in length, partly in the parish of Coton and partly in the parish of Appleton Roebuck.

Work No. 1-A railway (7,000 metres in length) in the parish of Shipton, in the parish of Northowton and terminating in the parish of Coton:

Work No. 2-A railway 1,060 metres in length, commencing in the parish of Northowton and terminating in the parish of Coton:

Work No. 3-A railway 1,060 metres in length, commencing in the parish of Coton and terminating in the parish of Appleton Roebuck.

Work No. 4-A railway 1,060 metres in length, partly in the parish of Coton and partly in the parish of Appleton Roebuck.

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Motoring

Russia's lonely drivers fend for themselves



A week spent in the Soviet Union looking at the car industry and driving conditions there has convinced me that there is something to be said after all for being a motorist in the West, traffic jams and petrol prices notwithstanding. With only five million cars among 258 million inhabitants, the Soviet Union is still in the pioneer stage of owning and this is particularly true of the range and quality of services offered. Petrol stations, for instance, are rare enough to be specially marked on maps of Moscow and there are very few service and repair outlets.

Owners of the Lada (the Russian version of the Fiat 124) can call upon 142 main service centres in the entire country, plus 150 minor ones and a number of mobile units. No wonder that motorists are encouraged to do their own servicing and repairs; if the Lada comes with such a comprehensive tool kit.

Spare parts are in such short supply

as pifering is rife and Russian drivers often remove the windscreen before parking. If there is a caldown, there is no friendly motor organization to give help at the roadside.

Petrol may be cheap by Western standards but the cars are not. The Soviet motor industry deliberately charges high prices on the home market. Increasing demand for the limited number of cars available will exceed the supply.

The 1500 Moskvitch costs 6,800 rubles (roughly £5,100). This means that the average Moskvitch owner would have to save every ruble in his pay for three and a half years to buy one. A comparable car in Britain costs, say, £2,500, or the equivalent of about nine months' earnings.

As in Britain after the war, the shortage of cars has meant high secondhand prices and, inevitably, a black market. Secondhand business is supposed to through state-owned commission ops, which set the prices, but there are private deals in which considerably more money changes hands.

Roads, apart from the main routes, are primitive. Only a fifth of the road network is surfaced. But the roads that are available are far less developed than in the West and though

some Moscow authorities are beginning

to concentrate along traffic jams I witnessed like the ones now queuing at build up in London or Paris. Also, if and when Moscow does get car ownership equal to London's it will be in a much better position to do. Almost all the arterial roads are dual carriageways, with three or four lanes each side, and there are numerous flyovers, tunnels and pedestrian overpasses.

The road system has developed less

phariously than in Western capitals and is basically a number of ring roads with spokes leading into the centre. Ring metars have not yet appeared and there is no legal point as to whether, since all land is owned by the state, they can be charged for leaving in cars.

Some traffic laws are much tougher

than in Britain. Drivers are not permitted any alcohol, and the first offence means automatic loss of licence for two years, a fine of 30 rubles and a new driving test before

Russia's new four-wheel drive hatchback, the Niva

being allowed back on the road. A would like to get it for the British market if the problem of converting to right-hand drive can be overcome.

The Russian breathalyser looks like a clinical thermometer and is known as the "yellow submarine" after the colour of the crystals, which turn blue if the motorist has been drinking.

Molchov and Shinkarenko, the inventors of the device, are said to be the Soviet motorist's least favourite people.

The driving test is in three parts. First, there is a medical examination which includes checks on eyesight and heart condition. Then a theoretical examination, in which candidates sit at an illuminated panel setting out eight traffic problems and have to put buttons to indicate their answers.

More than one wrong means failure, but successful candidates go on to the driving section of the test, which may last only 10 minutes if the examiner is satisfied.

The preparation required for the test is enormous and includes 140 hours of technical instruction, 60 hours on traffic laws, 20 on road safety, 15 on first aid and 32 of actual driving. The pass rate is said to be 70 per cent, compared with less than half in Britain. One excellent idea is that road safety is a compulsory part of the school curriculum from the age of seven; the authorities are very keen to reduce the number of accidents among children. Seat belt wearing is compulsory and the overall speed limit is only 90 kilometres an hour (55 mph the same is in the United States).

The Russians are relatively slow to close road casualty figures. In Moscow they are said to be about 500 deaths a year, with a slight downward trend despite a steady increase in traffic. (In Greater London last year 652 people were killed on the roads.) For the Soviet Union as a whole, annual road deaths have been officially put at 45,000, which would be extraordinarily high in relation to the number of vehicles.

Tough all-rounder

The latest product of the Soviet car industry is the Niva, a small four-wheel drive car which shares the same engine and gearbox as the Lada but is of entirely Russian design. With large wheels and a high ground clearance, it is a sort of miniature Land-Rover and intended for use on farms and unmade country roads.

I briefly sampled the Niva on its proving ground and was impressed by the comfort over rough surfaces and its ability to cope with a ditch. The rally-like is a useful feature, but there is a high lip and the boot is small unless the rear seat is folded forward. But the vehicle is barely 13 feet long and has an excellent turning circle.

The 1.6 litre overhead camshaft engine is good; acceleration is not bad but this is hardly of the essence: more relevantly, the Niva can tow caravans and trailers up to 17 cwt. Production has only just started and is not expected to exceed 50,000 units a year by 1980. Nor is it planned to export the Niva at the moment, though Sava Motors, which sell the Lada here,

Enter Sabrina

Coincidentally, there is a four-wheel drive model among the Japanese Subaru cars which go on sale for the first time in Britain today. There are five models in saloon, coupé and estate form, sharing a 1600cc flat-four engine driving the front wheels, independent suspension and rack-and-pinion steering.

Four-wheel drive is available on the estate, which should make it a useful off-road vehicle for farmers, country vets and the hunting-shooting-fishing fraternity. At £3,697 it is the most expensive of the range, which starts at £2,597 for the two-door saloon.

The styling of the car is typically Japanese, distinguished by a high waistline and shallow windows and despite front-wheel drive—proclaimed on the outside of the car—the interior struck me as rather cramped. But I suspect that like other Japanese cars the Subaru will be sold more as a reliable vehicle than a pretty or a roomy one.

Peter Waymark

Editorial, *Autosport*

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the Lord, saying, whom shall I

send? And he said, send him

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house of Israel.

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BOTTRELL.—On November 1st,

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islane, London, a son, Lee, to

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FINNING.—On November 29, at

12.15 p.m., a son, Nicholas

John, to Anna and

Matthew Finning.

DRYDEN.—On November 29,

at Queen Charlotte's Hospital,

London, a son, Daniel, to

John and Anna Dryden.

FRASER.—On Nov. 29, at

Queen Charlotte's Hospital, Lon-

don, a son, Nicholas, to

John and Anna Fraser.

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a Special Report on the diverse and far-flung regions which make up the federation

NIGERIA

Military men seek to clean out Augean stables

by Peter Hill

Empty oil drums plug the gaps between the seven rough hewn stakes of a makeshift execution dais on Bar Beach.

The citizens of Lagos who reside on Victoria Island and return to the cutting edge of sand at weekends to bathe and lounge in the sun have become inured to the crackle of rifle fire on a Saturday morning. Death by firing squad has become as much a part of life in Lagos as the appalling and senseless deaths in road accidents.

When executions take place thousands of people make the journey to Bar Beach to witness the fate that awaits any armed robber who is tracked down. But the question to which these executions represent an effective deterrent rather than a spectacle is open to question. The armed robbers persist. Nigeria's military rulers, who are committed to establishing a "disciplined, fair, just and humane African society" in the country before they hand over power to a civilian regime in less than two years, are unlikely to halt the executions.

The next 18 months or so in the period to October 1979, when free elections are held for the first time since 1966, will be the most crucial and critical since the civil war which tore the country asunder.

Nigeria is a vast and populous nation and, thanks to oil, far richer than many of its neighbours on the African continent. But the gap between the haves and have-nots, rather than closing, is perceptibly widening.

The Federal Military Government has taken steps to ensure that the ostentation which characterized the life-style of many of those

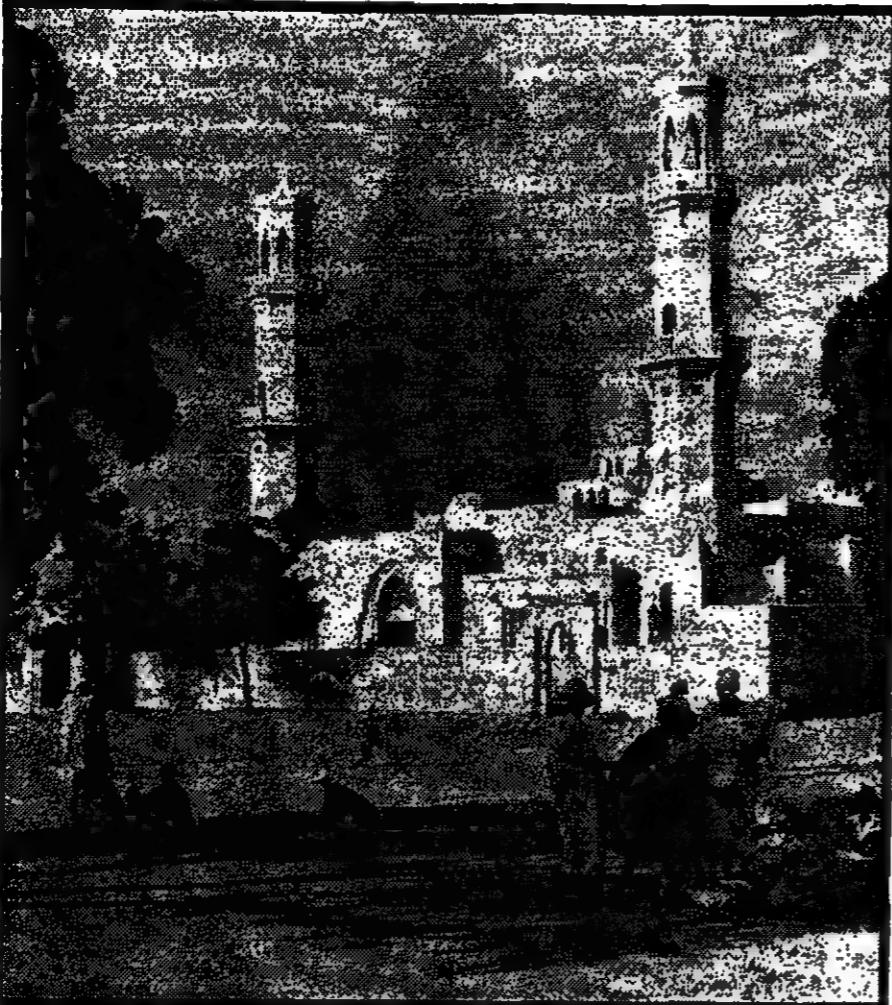
who had become fat on the back of the country's economic boom was contained.

The military men who assumed power after the deposition of General Gowon, and who were set back by the assassination of General Murtala Muhammad in February last year, have sought to bring about a new sense of direction in Nigeria. Under the Gowon regime the country had drifted. The third development plan, its vast spending programme linked to the expectation of steadily rising revenues from crude oil, was quickly undermined.

The scope and emphasis of the plan have since been reviewed and new priorities established. Because of inflation the plan will cost more to carry out and it is doubtful whether more than about 40 per cent of the projects will be completed before the end of the plan period in 1980.

The military men who govern Nigeria have by their words and actions sought to clean out the country's Augean stables. Chronic price inflation and the great cement scandal have been tackled purposefully and although there are still considerable shortcomings, the improvements have been marked.

Nigeria's Civil Service, a byword for indolence, inefficiency and corruption has been purged with thousands of people being prematurely retired or dismissed, from lowly office messengers to top government officials. But the purges, which initially caught the public's attention and support (although not necessarily for the most altruistic reasons), have created a vacuum. Promotion prospects are brighter but experience has suffered as a result and corruption re-



Scenes from regional life: an old mosque in Kano in the north and two men playing the game in Oyo in the west.



Indeed many consider that feature of the regime of October. It is worse than ever. Certainly the soldiers who apply the restrictions to the letter are still relieving departing travellers of surplus naira in transactions which take place in airport corners.

Local government reforms have been carried through, although the efficacy of this measure will not be appreciated until the return to civilian rule. New states have been created to an attempt to cut across tribal boundaries. Plans have been approved for the construction of a new Federal capital.

But the most important

political activity, however, remains proscribed until the beginning of October next of thought through which they engage in political activities". The official statement also observed that it had received word that Nigerians had been seeking alliances and making political contacts—activities that would not be allowed before the ban was lifted.

Clandestine meetings have taken place and will continue as the months tick by to October, 1978. Speakers in the Assembly have shown that they are prepared to speak out candidly on a wide range of topics. This has no doubt appealed to the 40

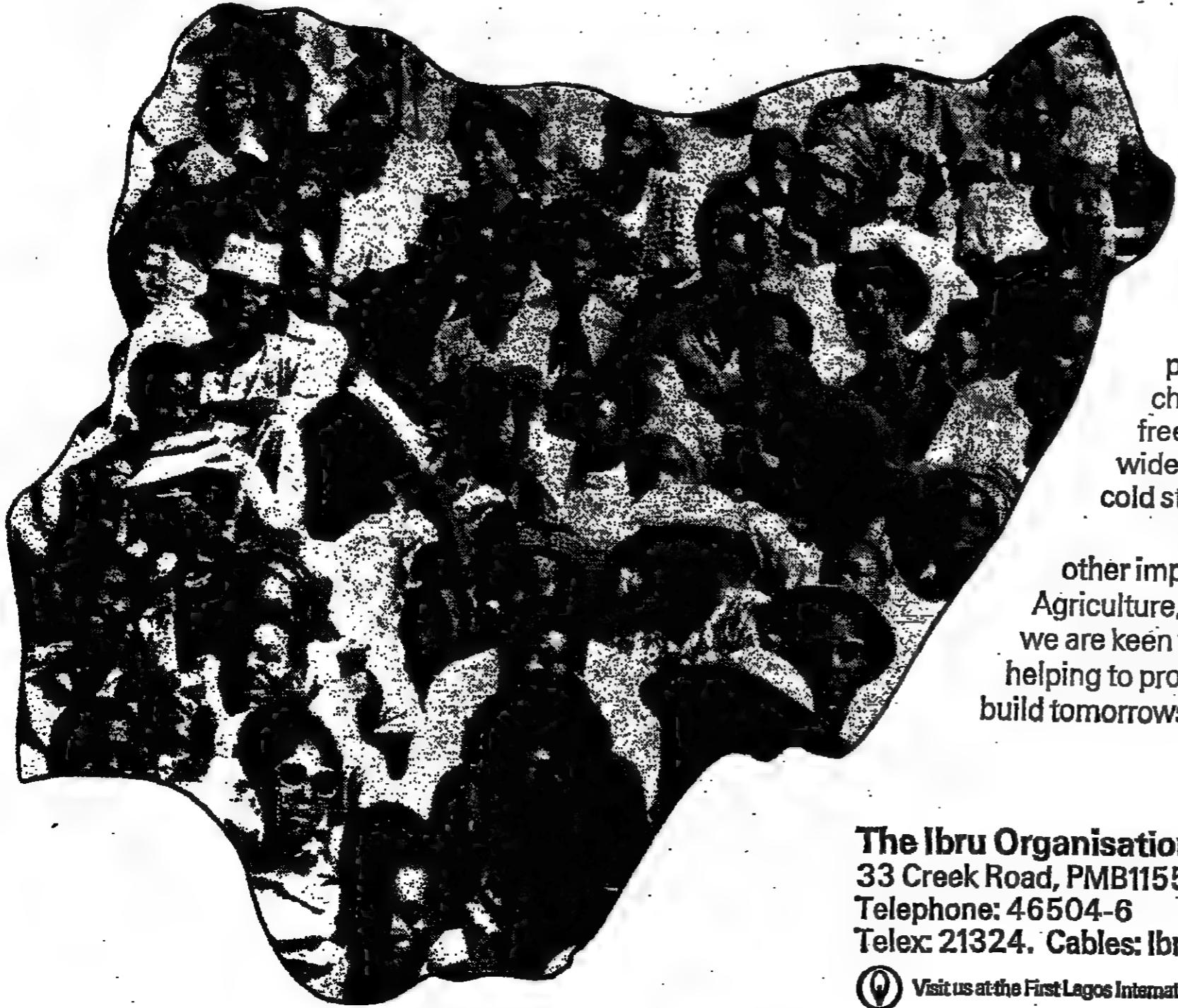
million or so electors who will cast their votes in October 1979.

In a country as diverse as Nigeria, where factionalism and tribalism are endemic, can any civilian regime survive for any length of time? Is black Africa's largest army—of more than 200,000 men—going to return quietly to the barracks and remain there after more than 12 years in power?

Whether the tribal jealousies and rivalries can be effectively subsumed beneath the slogan "Nigeria first" is even more difficult to assess. Certainly tribal allegiances and identification remain strong. Typical comments from educated business men can perhaps best illustrate the difficulties. "My first allegiance is to my tribe", one Yoruba businessman said, while another confided that he put Nigeria first and looked forward to the return of a democratically elected government "provided that it is not dominated by northerners".

For the present, however, Nigeria's military rulers who have increasingly become involved in foreign affairs, most notably over the future of Rhodesia and South Africa, have difficulties of their own to deal with at home. They include continuing high levels of inflation, balance of payments difficulties and the responsibility of forging ahead with the development plan, all of which will have to be shouldered by a civilian administration eventually.

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On this and the next page Peter Hill examines steps to improve links with the outside world and between different parts of the country

PORTS

Bureaucracy rather than congestion now causes delays

A transformation has taken place in Lagos harbour. Two years ago the congestion at Nigeria's principal port was chronic; hundreds of ships swung at anchor for months, awaiting berths to unload their cargoes. Now, jugs are busy day and night pushing lighters from ocean-going ships anchored to buoys in the harbour to the new Kirikiri lighter terminal on Badagry Creek. The insatiable demand for goods that was created by the country's economic boom is much nearer being satisfied than seemed possible at the height of the standstill.

Priority continues to be given to increasing the efficiency of the port by building new facilities in the Lagos-Apapa area. One of the most spectacular improvements has been the construction of a new 10-berth facility at Tin Can Island, which cost at a cost of N189m. Fifteen months ago the island was a swampland wilderness with its warehouses and gleaming green cranes, is slowly moving into operation (although not as quickly as many shipping companies would like) and further relieving pressure on the port.

Recently Lagos-Apapa—with more than 70 berths—has been handling more than 700,000 tonnes of cargo a month. When Tin Can Island is fully operational the figure is expected to rise to some one million tonnes a month. Nearly 50 per cent of the cargoes are being discharged in lighters, the traditional method of cargo handling at Lagos-Apapa.

The Nigerian Ports Authority, which faced the task of alleviating the choking of the port in the wake of the great cement scandal, has achieved substantial progress. But purges among its staff, as in other branches of the Civil Service in Nigerian in the campaign waters.

Further development of the Apapa port complex is under way. By next May a third wharf extension, involving the construction of a quay 1,000 metres long, will be completed. It is with a water depth of 12.5 metres and 200,000 sq ft of storage space, is due for completion. An estimated N75m is being spent on the project. It will include the provision of six additional berths and a new container terminal designed to meet the needs of a business that has expanded rapidly in the past 10 years. In 1968 the port handled 182 containers but in 1975-76 it dealt with nearly 23,000 and the traffic continues to increase. At present about 97 per cent of containers are handled by Nigerian ports on the existing one berth on the existing Apapa quays, the balance through Ward and Port Harcourt.

The new container berth will be equipped with modern handling facilities and will be served both by road and rail transport.

Other development projects are under way at Port Harcourt, the country's second largest port, which handles about 15 per cent of Nigeria's foreign trade, excluding oil and gas.

Port Harcourt,

which lies on a bend in the Bonny river 76 kilometres from the sea, has eight berths, one of which is used solely for loading coal. Under the third development plan four new berths along a further 1,000 metres of quay are to be built at a cost of N40m.

The present port complex covers 47 hectares and is provided with both road and rail connections. There are truck sheds and four modern warehouses, and the total storage area amounts to about 41,000 sq metres.

Some of Nigeria's smaller ports are also expanding. At Warri, 125km from Escravos Bay, a 160-metre long wharf

can accommodate two deep

sea ships, but four more berths are to be constructed by 1980 at a cost of N27m. At Koko on the Benue river N15m is to be spent on building five new berths and a fish and shrimp terminal 610 metres long is also to be constructed.

Facilities at Calabar, which lies 9km from the main entrance channel of the

Cross river, are also to be developed. A new port is being built upstream from the present one. This will provide four berths costing N16.5m. When all these schemes are completed Nigeria's ports will be among the most modern in the world.

*E1=1.182 naira.



Apapa docks, Lagos. The new terminal has gone a long way to relieve the congestion.

The traffic congestion of Lagos and the interminable delays are still far from being a feature of the past despite the construction of new elevated roads designed to siphon traffic from the central area. Passenger cars and commercial vehicles clog the main arterial roads in and out of the major conurbations.

As the Nigerian economy has boomed, so has the development of road transport to a point where saturation has been reached.

Added to this is the gross inefficiency of the railway system, with relatively short journeys taking much longer than they should because of the narrow-gauge single track.

It has led Nigeria's emergent industries to funnel much of their freight

business on to the roads.

A main feature of the country's third development plan is expenditure on improving both the road and rail facilities of the huge country. Throughout the federation some 12,000km of roads are being built. About 7,000km are represented by projects which have been commissioned as part of the current plan (1975-80), while design teams are working on the preparation of a further 13,000km.

The cost of these projects alone is N3,400m, while the total planned capital expenditure on road construction during the five-year period is about N6,000m on the basis of the estimates contained in the revised plan.

Overall, the federal government is responsible for the planning, design and construction of some 27,000km of primary roads, which includes 16,000km of roads which have been taken over by the federal authorities from various state governments. Under

the revised plan, the state governments are responsible for nearly 70,000km of secondary roads and feeder roads which link to the main primary roads.

A central feature of the planned road development programme, according to Mr M. T. Usman, permanent secretary at the Federal Ministry of Works, is to achieve coordinated development, national integration and economic efficiency.

Considerable spending is also scheduled to take place on the construction of bypasses in the dozen urban centres and the construction of flyovers and elevated crossings to alleviate traffic density in the centre of the major cities. Under the plan, the 19 state governments will be working on 19,000km of roads in their areas, which is expected to cost close on N1,000m.

About half the road development taking place in the states is devoted to the construction of main feeder roads to the federal road network. The result of the developments which are scheduled—and the magnitude of the task makes their completion in the present plan period most unlikely—is to be a comprehensive road system much better equipped to meet the demands which are being made upon it.

The railway system, which was laid down in the dying years of the nineteenth century, has suffered from lack of investment funds for many years and the poor use of the system has meant that it has been unable to generate sufficient funds to bring about the improvements which are desperately needed.

The industry too has suffered from being unable to attract sufficient managers with administrative ability.

The system—which was built in the shape of a large letter H to link the pre-

dominantly agricultural northern regions to the coastal belt—has considerable potential. But the fact that it can take 30 hours to travel along the single narrow gauge track from Lagos to Kaduna, compared with a little over one hour by internal air services, does not commend itself to the growing number of travellers.

Big benefit in opening up hinterland

Nevertheless, the 3,505km of 3ft 6in track remains a major benefit in the opening up of the hinterland and, it is hoped, in diverting an increasing quantity of road freight to the railways, both in terms of exports from the hinterland and imports which are required to support the industrial service developments under way in the states.

The third plan calls for the laying of standard gauge

system along 950km of track

as well as the construction

of viaducts, tunnels and six

bridges at a total cost of

N500m.

Meantime there is speculation that the management of the railway system may be let on a contract basis to a foreign company. Three countries—India, Hungary and France—are the front runners. The favourite is India, which recently signed a cooperation agreement with Nigeria through Rail India Technical and Economic Services. It is understood that the contract, which would last for between three and five years, will involve the supervision of the planned construction to standard gauge steels. The Brazilian company of Eletroservice has been given a contract for the administrative systems.



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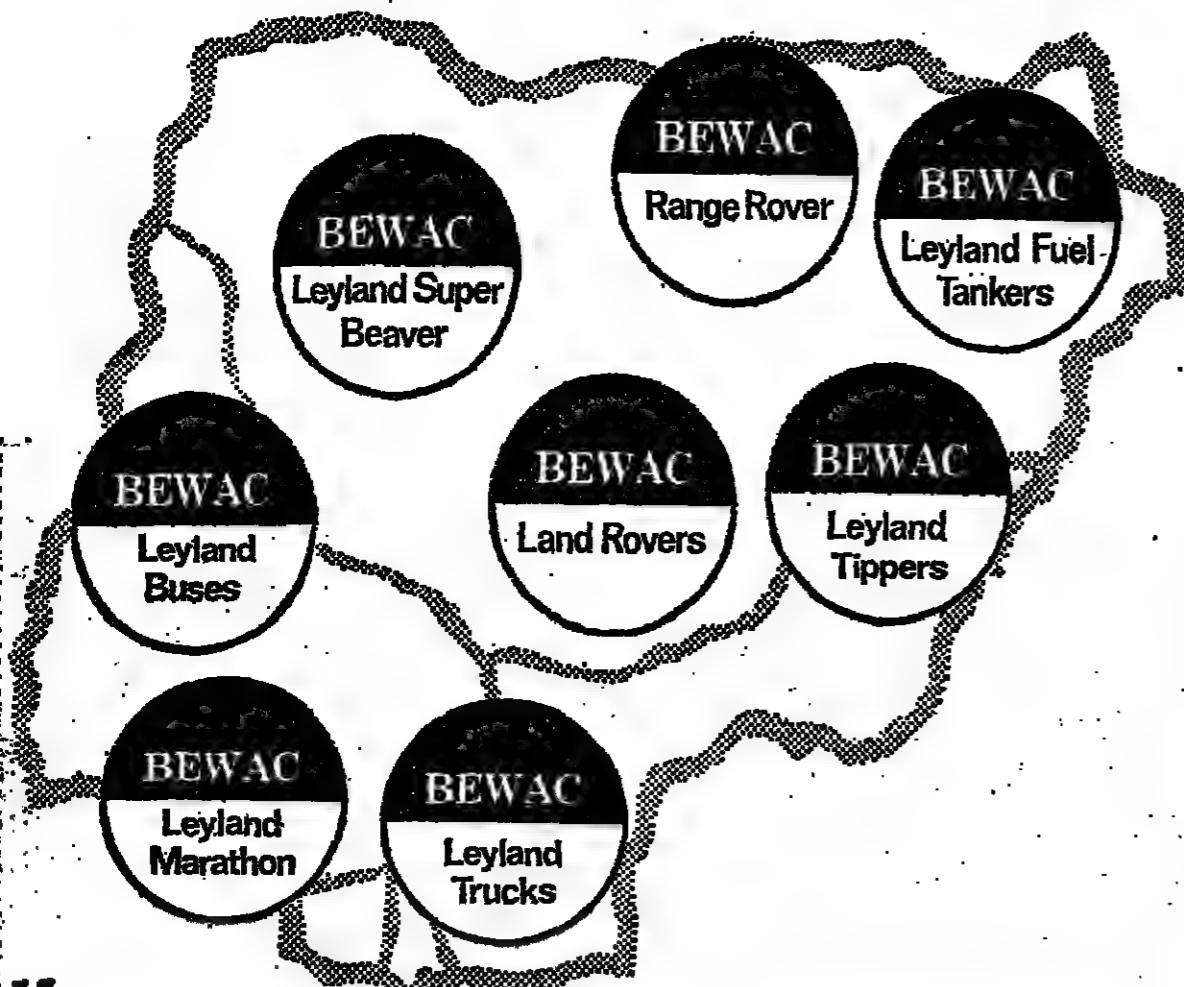
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This is bound to add to Nigeria's wealth and provide more jobs and training opportunities for Nigerians.

It will also mean that as a manufacturer actually making commercial vehicles in Nigeria, Leyland will be able to develop an even better understanding of Nigerian conditions and the specifications needed to cope with them.

Leyland are already a lot further down this road than other manufacturers in the market, because the Land Rover has been hard at work in Nigeria for over 20 years.

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AVIATION

Spending their way out of chaos



A Fokker being fuelled at Murtala Muhammad airport, which will be able to take supersonic aircraft when development work is completed.

Murtala Muhammad airport may appear to passengers to be a chaotic nightmare, but it has improved. The shortcomings and difficulties of Nigeria's principal airport, 15 miles from Lagos, have been recognized, and next year should see the opening of a new airport. It became all too apparent some years ago that the existing facilities could not possibly cope with the flood of passengers.

When the developments are completed in 1978, rather than 1978, the airport will be able to accommodate not only the 747s that international airlines are using increasingly, but also supersonic aircraft. The projects which have been implemented form part of a comprehensive and ambitious plan for the country's airport and general aviation development, involving construction of new airports and improving existing facilities.

Under the revised spending limits of the third national development plan covering 1975-80, N700m has been allocated for the development of airport facilities throughout the country. Earlier this year, Dr William Osiogwu, Federal Commissioner for Aviation, disclosed that N400m had been committed and of that about half had been paid for work done.

Apart from the developments at Lagos, six other airports, at Port Harcourt, Maiduguri, Kano, Kaduna, Sokoto, and Ilorin are being improved to the standard which will enable them to accommodate jumbo jets. Airports at Calabar, Enugu, Jos, Benin, Ibadan and Yola are being redeveloped to enable 737 size aircraft to land, and other improvements are planned at Zaria, Gusau and Wardi.

Completion of the planned developments will produce one of the most comprehensive internal airline networks in Africa and provide

links to international destinations from deepest Nigeria. At Lagos, the main focus of the development programme is the reconstruction of the runway to accommodate the large over-improvements to what must have ranked as one of the most uncomfortable terminals facilities in the world. Work has been delayed as a result of shortages of essential equipment in the initial phases. Apart from the physical improvements, the aircraft is being equipped with radar and associated aircraft handling and control facilities. The acute shortage of hotel accom-

modation should also be partially alleviated by the construction of a hotel.

The secondary runway at Kano has been lengthened and strengthened to cope with the expected increase in traffic. The new lay-out at Ilorin is designed in such a way that it will provide an alternative to Murtala Muhammad airport.

Planned developments at Port Harcourt, the centre of Nigeria's oil industry, have been hampered by bad weather, the poor sub-soil and the lack of access to the new airport site, compounded by difficulties in

the financial management of new aircraft has so far not led to any marked improvement in the reliability of several of the company's internal flights. Nigeria Airways established nearly 20 years ago after the dissolution of West African Airways (Nigeria) in 1958. The state-owned undertaking owns a fleet of more than 20 aircraft, including seven F27s and seven F28s, two Boeing 707s, two DC10s and a number of other short and medium-range jets. Last year the fleet was more than doubled and this year it has grown by half again.

However, the introduction

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Phones get priority in big development plan

Scores of foreign technicians are working desperately with their Nigerian counterparts to revive the country's over-loaded and largely obsolescent telecommunications links both within the country and with the world outside.

The vicissitudes of Nigeria's telephone system are legion. Telephones go silent and often remain so for months; contact over even short distances becomes impossible. Often, to find that the telephone is working is cause for jubilation.

Most of the faults can be attributed to shortages of adequately trained staff, over-modulated and over-loaded equipment and disruptions caused by the widespread civil engineering projects which are under way throughout the country. Significant efforts are, however, being made to redress the shortcomings. When the present modernisation programme is completed, Nigeria will possess one of the most comprehensive telecommunications systems in the world.

Existing density of telephones is equivalent to one per thousand of the country's huge population—one of the lowest density rates in the world. The network is largely manually operated. Much of the exchange equipment is nearly 30 years old and fewer than 50 locations have automatic equipment.

But under the provisions of the revised third national development plan, a total of N1,300m is being committed to improving the telecommunications network. Nigeria's military rulers have placed great emphasis on the development of the communications service, embracing both the postal and telecommunications operations.

On the postal side the Federal Military Government is to spend N125m on new post office buildings and more than 3,000 new postal agencies are to be installed in Lagos to increase the international trunk capacity from about 80 to more than 300. In the north of the country, a similar computerized facility is to be introduced at the proposed new telex switching centre, which will provide a direct link with the nearest large centre in the country's telex network.

A further N5m is to be spent on the provision of automatic switching facilities in Lagos for public and private telegraph services and to connect the circuits via satellite, short-wave radio or micro-wave links to other telegraph centres and which will also be able to handle trans-traffic between countries.

This year it is expected that as a result of the improvements already made,



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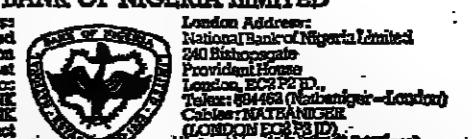
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This and the following five pages contain profiles of nine regions throughout the country

IBADAN

Beggars flow downstream against the tide of cars

by Richard Thomas

swimming splash of rust and gold—flung among seven hills like broken China in the sun.

John Pepper Clark, in this poem of 1950, captured the dusty streets, the rusting galvanised tin roofs and the gleaming sunsets of Ibadan. It remains an accurate snapshot today. On one of the hills, the British Royal district association with the town below, viewed from the hotel's anonymous modernity the sea of brown rooftops surges without relief. A million and a half people crowd Ibadan with their life's needs, making it the largest indigenous city in Africa.

A key commercial, economic and intellectual centre in Nigeria, this central Yoruba town is now capital of Oyo state. Aware of its importance, the city struggles to outlive its inhabitants with their noisy and dirty houses, their affluence and filthiness.

The roads of Ibadan have succumbed to the people, beggars and street sellers on downstream against the tide of cars, lapping against one car window after another, thrusting brushes in bags, pants and pegs and outstretched palms at sweating occupants inside. Each market the umbrellas are used in ranks, waving departure, and their rivers shout in competition in price for travel.

But the people have compensated Ibadan for their resources; they have attracted the publishers, the major commercial and manufacturing companies, the Kingsway stores and the British Council; they have inspired the university, the Institute of Church and Society; they have nurtured the woodcarvers and the cloth weavers.

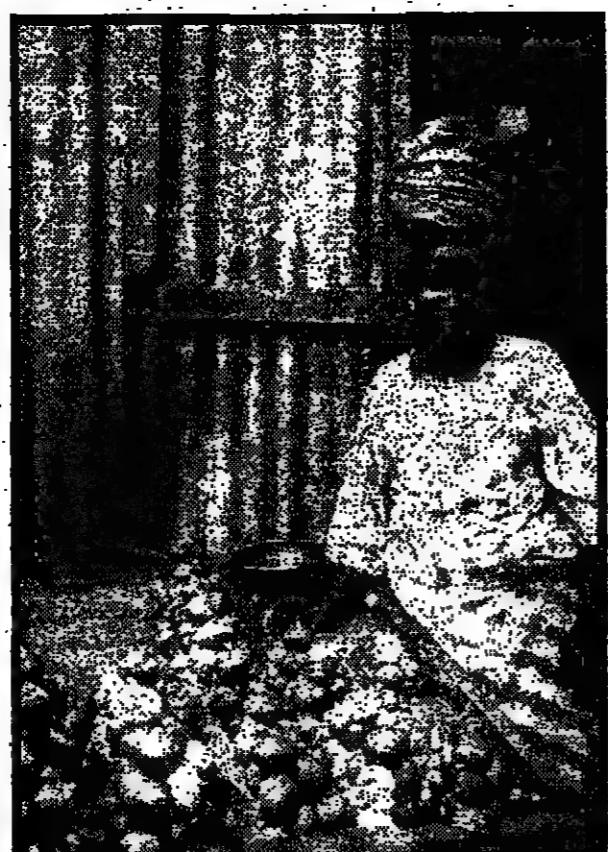
It has not always been so. The traditional Yoruba sources were Ife and Oyo, but in the early nineteenth century the Yoruba kings fell and a long period of civil disorder ensued.

This was exacerbated by

the Muslim Fulani from the north whose advance south stopped the Yoruba from raiding the middle belt for slaves, and caused them to raid each other instead. Groups of bandits roamed Yoruba-land and around 1829 a group set up camp in what was to become Ibadan. The camp became a rallying point and a place of safety for the refugees, both from the civil wars and from the Fulani incursions into Oyo.

Gradually it was established as the Yoruba military headquarters. British missionaries joined the Fulani who mounted. In 1851 the town had 11 miles of protective walls and its population grew rapidly to 60,000. By the time it came under British rule in 1893, the population had risen to about 120,000.

The success of Ibadan was



Smiles all round: whether it is selling onions or sharing the one desk at a crowded village school near Ibadan.



based on a number of factors. The hills in and around the town provided good look-out points; the protective walls were defensible and thus encouraged more people to settle in Ibadan; and luck perhaps had it sufficiently far into the high forest that Fulani horsemen were discouraged from mounting an attack on it. The population used Ibadan as a fortified village whence they would journey to their farms outside the walls during the day. Indeed, it is still referred to as a giant village, and about a fifth of the inhabitants still work as farmers, travelling out of their farms whenever necessary.

Ibadan was not a traditional Yoruba centre, although it had long had a traditional chief, called the Olu of Ibadan, and its inhabitants felt willing to experiment with change. They laid great emphasis on modernity: they were ready to adapt their life-styles and to become involved with trade and commerce. They also accepted the Western educational system, brought by the British, and Ibadan became (like Abeokuta, another refugee town) an educational centre.

However, it did not quickly become a political centre. Despite its pre-eminence as a trading centre it was ruled by Oyo from 1900; when Southern Nigeria was put

under British protection, and growing economic significance encouraged settled immigration. "Strangers' quarters" were established; the Nupe and people from Ilorin settled in Mokola; the Hausa and Fulani traders at Sabo, and people from the east of Nigeria at Eketeda.

These areas are today a mile or two from the traditional walled centre of the town which is around Mapo Hall, and they separate it from the railway line which runs to the west of the old town.

During the early part of the twentieth century, Ibadan had grown rapidly. The railway arrived from Lagos in 1901 and the first trunk road in Nigeria was built from Ibadan to Oyo in 1905. Cocoa was developed as a major cash crop and roads were built in the 1920s to facilitate its transport, first to Ibadan, and then to the docks at Lagos.

Ibadan's central position

and growing economic significance encouraged settled immigration. "Strangers' quarters" were established; the Nupe and people from Ilorin settled in Mokola; the Hausa and Fulani traders at Sabo, and people from the east of Nigeria at Eketeda.

These areas are today a mile or two from the traditional walled centre of the town which is around Mapo Hall, and they separate it from the railway line which runs to the west of the old town.

The old parliament building and the secretariat are situated to the north-east, and beyond a square mile, giving an average of 24 people to a house and as many as 100 to a compound.

The Yorubas' ready acceptance of new ideas and techniques and the demand for a whole range of goods and services, which in Ibadan's size generates, has created thousands of small factories and workshops all around the city. Tailors and wood-workers abound on every street and the demands of the mechanical age have fostered the development of hundreds of small engineering workshops which repair cars, lorries, bicycles, and motor cycles.

In some ways the future of Ibadan is uncertain; as the capital of a smaller state it has lost some of its power and a number of its senior administrators have gone to run other states. But

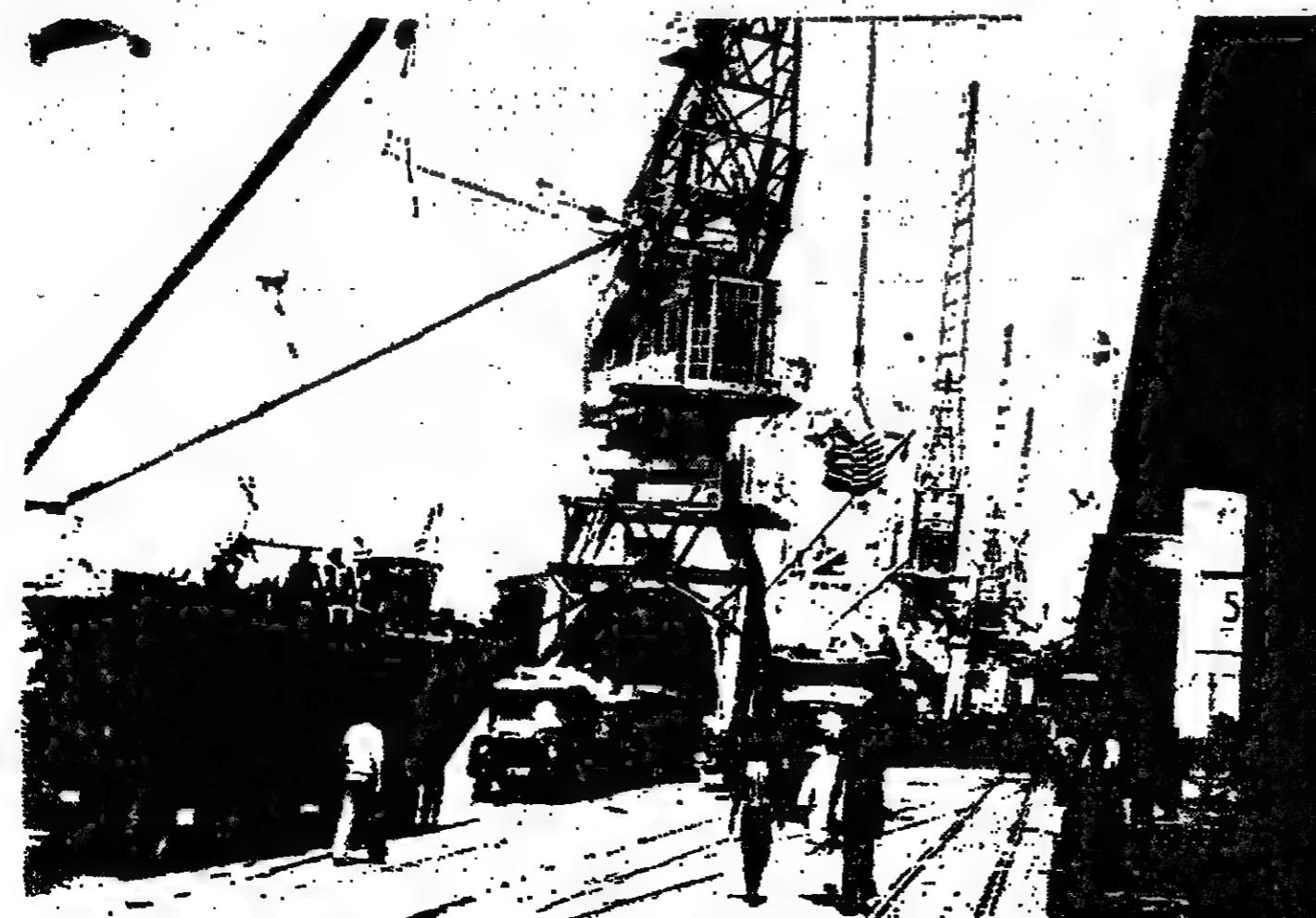
it will probably prosper if it continues to invest in education, improving its services, and encouraging industry and agriculture. The Caxton Press was set up in Ibadan in 1956.

At the artistic level Ibadan can compete with any city in Nigeria. Traditional dyeing, weaving, and embroidery are still popular, and wood-workers such as the Falaye brothers produce articles of high quality. The chapel doors of the university are a fine example of the relief style of wood carving and near the university is the Dominican community housed in impressive buildings designed by Dennis Nwoko.

The author, formerly a teacher in Western State, is a lecturer in African studies at the Centre for International Briefing, Farnham Castle.

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PORT HARCOURT

An unenviable reputation for lawlessness

Port Harcourt, capital of Rivers state, Nigeria's second largest port and operational centre, for much of the oil industry, has achieved a reputation for lawlessness and a 'faster' police campaign is under way to halt the spate of armed robberies. Citizens must observe a midnight to 6 am curfew imposed by the military governor in an attempt to check armed gangs.

Early last month soldiers and mobile police clashed in Port Harcourt after an incident at the airport involving an army officer and the mobile police. A police sergeant was shot dead. A week later a gang of armed robbers mounted a road block on one of the main roads leading out of the city at dusk. More than 50 vehicles were stopped and an estimated 800 people found themselves forced to hand over 'money and possessions'.

Rivers is a huge state of about 28,000 sq km and its creeks and swamps provide excellent bases for the robber bands. Port Harcourt itself, a sprawling city, provides the focal point for much of the state's industrial activity although a large number of the 1,700,000 population (1963 census) make their living from farming and fishing. New federal and state government offices blocks have been built since the civil war and most of the buildings damaged during the war have been rebuilt.

The capital boasts a college of science and technology and a new university college is being built. Institutions within the city boundaries include banks, buildings, aluminium products and the manufacture of soft drinks, tyres, traps and cigarette. But it is the oil industry which is predominant.

All the major oil companies in Nigeria have their headquarters in Port Harcourt. Rivers is the leading oil-producing state in the federation, accounting for nearly 50 per cent of all production. Two jetties have been built for oil exports.

Oil has placed considerable strains on the city's hotels although it has been alleviated to some extent by the completion of a new hotel and an extension to the Presidential Hotel, which will be ready for occupation next year.

But the oil and gas industry and the revenues which flow from it have produced other strains and tensions. Rivers receives more a head from federal revenue than other states but the questions of devolution and the pressure for an even greater allocation are likely to

remain issues for some considerable time.

The oil industry has provided the motive power for Nigeria's ambitious third national development plan. But since the plan was drawn up three years ago it quickly became apparent that the spending levels which were projected for industrial and associated development based on increased oil revenues could not be met. Crude oil output, in fact, reached a peak of 2,500,000 barrels daily in October, 1974, but fell to 1,500,000 barrels in May, 1975, just two months after the plan was launched.

In the same period the posted price of Nigeria low sulphur light crude also fell and seriously undermined financial calculations.

Production increased to about 2,500,000 barrels a day in May this year but has since fallen back and in September was estimated at 2,027,000 barrels. It dropped to about 1,800,000 barrels in October. Nigeria's oil is considered overpriced compared with other light low sulphur crudes produced in Algeria, Indonesia and Libya. The relative overpricing has been compounded by a glut of this type of oil, partly as a result of increased flows from the North Sea, whose oil is very similar to the crude produced from Nigerian fields.

Oil experts in Nigeria, however, reckon that a daily production of 2,000,000 barrels is still possible. P.H.

production of between 1,800,000 and 1,900,000 barrels is probably about the right volume in terms of producing a level of revenue which is commensurate with the realistic targets and ambitions of the national development plan.

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authorize their investment which lies some distance outlays in five equal annual instalments, although 1 per cent of each asset must be repaid in the books until the Government authorizes its disposal.

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found oil receive a capital

investment tax credit of 5

per cent for land operations

and up to 10 per cent for

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in water depths up to 100

metres, rising to 20 per cent

for offshore operations in

water up to 200 metres.

Costs of all exploratory drilling and the first two test

wells on each field under

the new provisions will be

fully offset against tax while

companies which have just

begun production will be

taxed at 63.75 per cent

for the first two years.

Meanwhile, there will be a

further surge in the develop-

ment of Port Harcourt over

the next few years as the

NNPC, with Shell-BP and

three other foreign oil com-

panies, begins work on the

first stages of the construc-

tion of a massive new gas

liquefaction plant on the

banks of the Bonny river.

Two projects have been

under discussion for some

years. It is now agreed

that the rival parties have

agreed to the construction

of a single plant, with the

existing 20 per cent

royalty will be retained for

onshore operations but will

be reduced to 18.5 per cent

for production from offshore

wells in water depths up to

100ft, and 16.5 per cent in

depths of more than 100ft.

Shell-BP, which operates

in partnership with the

Nigerian National Petroleum

Corporation, is the largest

producing company in

Nigeria and as a direct result

of the new measures it has

brought an exploration rig

back into operation.

The package, which will

apply retrospectively from

April 1 this year, involves

the bringing on stream of a new

company being allowed to field near Nembe Creek.

P.H.



Workers on an oil rig. Port Harcourt is the operational centre for much of the country's oil industry.

ANAMBRA AND IMO

Division produces new breed of Ibo entrepreneurs

by Sam Uba

If the division of Nigeria into 12 states in May 1967 was the Gowon master stroke that killed Biafra before it was born and ensured the survival of the Nigerian federation, the further splitting of the predominantly Ibo Central-Eastern state into two—Anambra and Imo states—in February 1976 must be seen as the one act that has eliminated from the Nigerian psyche the bogey of Ibo domination.

Not only are the Ibos pleased with the split, but in each of the new states there are powerful elements demanding further division. In Anambra, for example, there is agitation for a Waawa state to embrace Enugu, the present capital of Anambra state, and its neighbouring districts, and for an Idenmai state for Onitsha and adjoining divisions, which are regarded as having an educational, economic and cultural superiority over the other areas of the state.

Similar demands have also been voiced in Imo state by some leaders of the Igbo and Aro peoples. The common complaint in Imo state is against 'Aro imperialism', which dates back to before the British colonial era when the Aros were the principal slave dealers in the hinterland.

Those demands show that contrary to popular belief, Ibo solidarity is more superficial than real. The unity was a myth created by some ambitious Ibo politicians in the colonial era and fostered by their rivals from other ethnic groups.

Other Nigerians, especially the Hausas and Yorubas, their main rivals for power in the first republic, never

realized that there was no love lost between the various Ibo groups and that their internal wranglings and jealousies were more intense and bitter than could be found among other ethnic groups in the country.

Ibo desire for unity coupled with their feeling of insecurity led them to found tribal unions which, in turn, led others to suspect that the Ibos were organizing cabals to dominate Nigeria. Fear of the Ibos was the main factor that united the other Nigerians during the civil war just as fear of the other groups was the element that helped to prolong the resistance.

Until the late Murtala Muhammed enacted a decree carving out seven more states from Gowon's original 12, there was still the fear that the Ibos would soon re-emerge as a dominant influence, if not in politics, at least in commerce and industry.

The Ibos are not keen to return to the political limelight. Although well-known Ibo politicians such as Dr. K. O. Mbadire, Dr. J. O. Okezie, Dr. H. U. Nzeribe, Mr. C. C. Ono and promising newcomers such as Chief Joudjou and ex-colonel Hilary Njoku have been returned to the Constituent Assembly, Nigeria's new constitution for a return to civilian rule, it is generally accepted that the Ibo is seriously in the running for federal leadership.

The race for the presidency is going to be between the Yorubas and Hausas and the minority ethnic groups. But the Ibos could well become the kingmakers because contestants for supreme office would be canvassing them for support.

The immediate concern of the Ibos remains the rebuilding of their war-shattered

economy. They have accepted military defeat gracefully and their conquerors have been magnanimous in their victory—and are quickly regaining their old confidence. Most of the pre-war industries in the heartland of Eastern Nigeria, which suffered the worst devastation in the war, were reactivated within five years of the end of the war in 1970.

Among the war-damaged industries that are back in full production are the Nigeria Construction and Furniture Company at Enugu; Textile Printers at Onitsha; Nigeria Cement Company, Nkaklu; Nigerian Steel Company at Enugu; Independence Brewery at Umudike; Abo Textile Mills at Abo; Modern Ceramics at Umudike and Modern Shoe Industry at Owerri.

In the past two years new industries and factories have been springing up everywhere. Elsewhere in the country, the Ibos are active in the road haulage business and in the service industries.

As in the past, Lagos is again teeming with Ibo clerks and artisans and the high streets are again being dominated by Ibo-owned lock-up shops and stalls. The Ibos are also in public relations, advertising and business and industrial consultancy. Most of the new periodicals and magazines in Nigeria are either owned by Ibos or are edited and managed by them.

However, the break up of the Central-Eastern state into two seems to have produced a new kind of Ibo entrepreneur. The new men are still acquisitive, and combative and still possess that alchemy that seems to turn anything into gold. But the arrogance is gone.

Whereas in the past Ibos, particularly the so-called

Ibos, went satisfactorily acquiring property and flaunting their wealth in the faces of those in whose lands they lived, they are now more cautious where they acquire property and how they show their wealth.

Although they are again moving in to the various parts of the country, including the northern states from which they were chased in 1966-67, they are not yet settling there in large numbers as in the past. Now they are itinerant businessmen, with their homes and operational headquarters in their home states.

The position has changed little since then and for most Ibos the abandoned property question is the thing that most reminds them that they lost the civil war. The other reminder of the war is the very poor state of the roads in the two states.

Perhaps the Port Harcourt experience is the main reason Ibos are reluctant to acquire property outside their own states. As a result, building and construction has become the chief activity in the private sector in Anambra and Imo states. The main towns, such as Owerri, Orlu, Okiagwa and Aha in Imo state, and Onitsha, Nnewi, Awka, Ibadia and Enugu in Anambra state, are already becoming over-congested with new, unplanned buildings and factories.

The only area where Ibos are refusing to go is the Rivers state, where the issue of Ibo property abandoned during the war is still unresolved. Ibo property abandoned in Port Harcourt, capital of the River state, is valued at between £50m and £200m.

The property abandoned in other parts of the federation has been returned to its owners. But the Rivers state authorities have maintained that claimants to property in their area have not produced

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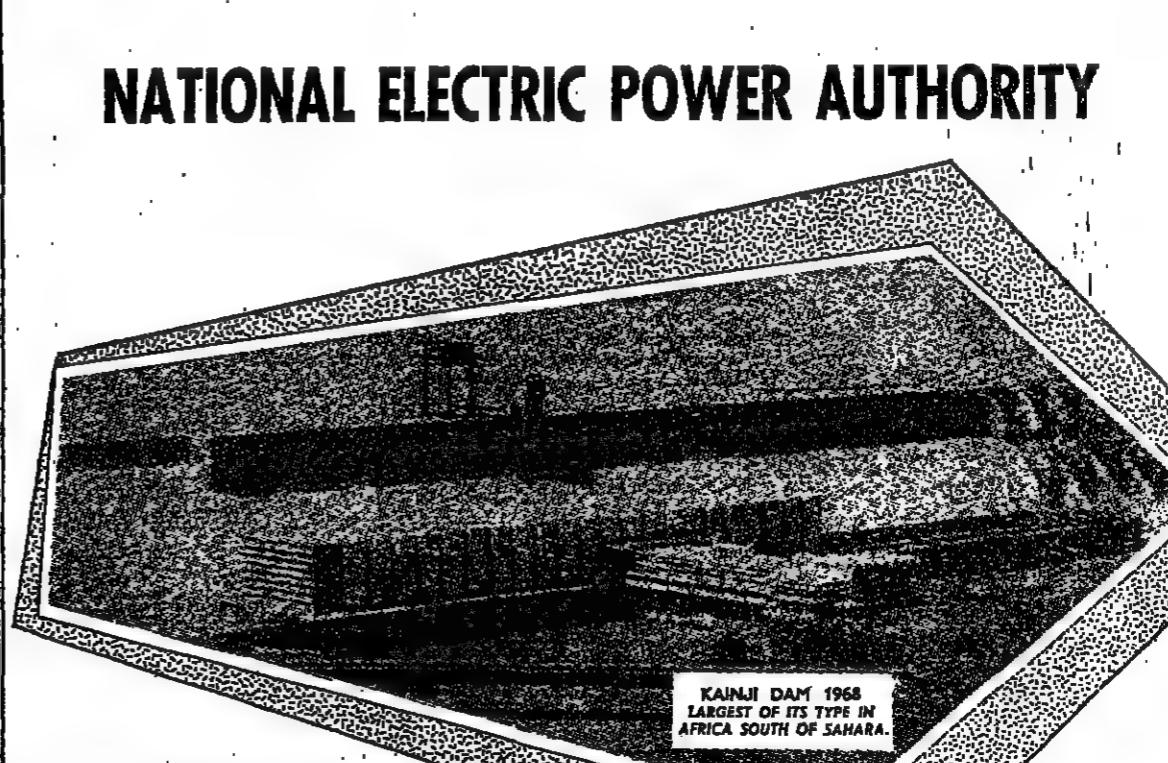
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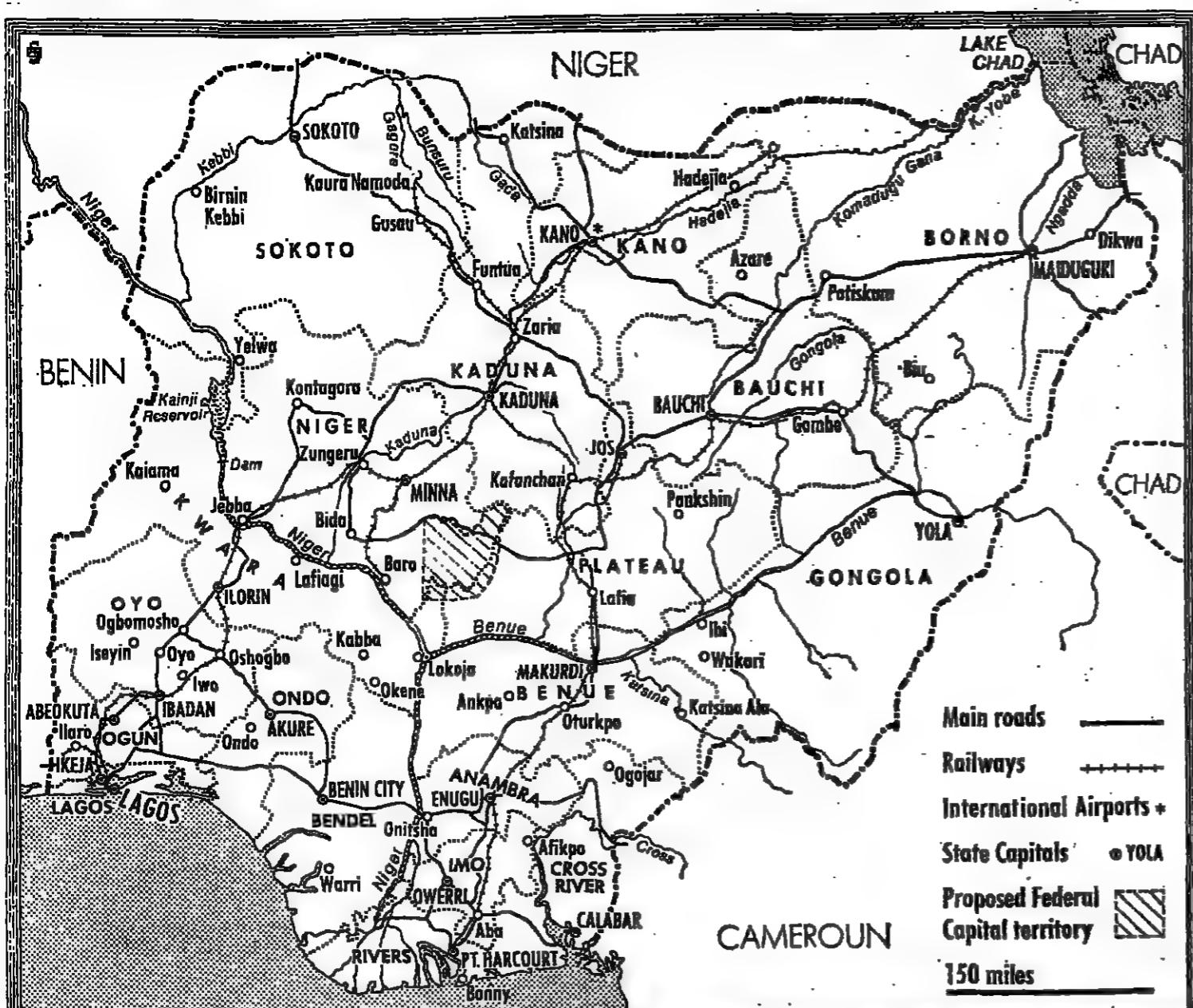
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The author is editor, New African Development.



Left: work goes ahead on the Lagos/Ibadan expressway: Above left: "The Awakening", a bronze symbolic of the renewal of independence. Above right: traffic in the centre of Lagos. Top: Lagos regatta.

LAGOS

City hurries to improve

by Peter Hill

Lagos is the nightmare that is becoming merely a bad dream. The traffic chokes the roads and streets of the federal capital, compounding the already debilitating climate with exhaust fumes; the telephone system is as temperamental as a prima donna; and the motorists model their driving style on that of Nicki Lauda and have developed a car horn Morse code to carve their way through the packed streets—they are all familiar and accepted features of life in Lagos.

The shortcomings are recognized and significant improvements have been made over the past two years, but Lagos is a city in a hurry, seething with people and stretching at its seemingly elastic seams so that the benefits of a much-improved road system have not yet been realized.

No one knows exactly how many people live (and simply exist) in the Lagos conurbation. Maps still issued by the Lagos state Government quote a figure of some 565,000 people based on the 1963 census—but even on a conservative basis most would put the capital's population at more than five times that figure.

It is a city of stark and quite dramatic contrasts. On Illovi and Victoria Islands, populated by a high proportion of expatriates and extremely wealthy Nigerians, large stretch-luxury-belt mansions with carefully nurtured gardens stand out as tangible evidence of the wealth which has been created in the wake of Nigeria's emergence as Black Africa's super power.

Yet only a few miles away along the snoring, arching elevated roadways, which snake through and over the sprawling city, in the suburbs of Mushin or Ajegunle, hundreds of thousands of people are living in shanties, and families are crowded into tiny "bunches".

The stench of open drains and piles of refuse rotting is all pervasive. In short, the conditions are appalling yet people survive, but the pressure on Lagos grows and grows as increasing numbers of Nigerians flock from the hinterland to the capital city, as they have done for generations.

The new roads which curve their way through the sprawling conurbation have provided accommodation for

thousands of people. Traders have established their stands beneath the thunder of the road traffic, which has odd and apparently unmoved and even number registrations and plates are shown on the roads, or almost daily has been forced to abandon it.

Overcrowded conditions and the difficulties of actually getting to work have led the Lagos state Government to transfer the state capital to Ikeja, more than 10 miles from the city of Lagos.

Lagos remains the magnet for millions of Nigerians and foreign businessmen despite its considerable privations.

But even the Nigerian businessmen are becoming concerned at the tension which the city's conditions create.

Considerable progress has been made in the past two years to relieve the congested inner ring road by the development of a "park and ride" system to make

central part of the city. The road traffic edict under which cars with odd and even number registrations and plates are shown on the roads, or almost daily has been forced to abandon it.

For those who can afford a second car (and they are not few) the edict enforced by civil and military police armed with kobokos has not proved too onerous.

Further improvements to promote the freer flow of traffic and reduce the accident toll form a feature of the state Government's policies.

New car parks are planned along with parking and terminal facilities for heavy commercial vehicles.

Additional vehicles are being bought for the underfunded and overstretched Lagos city transport service with the devolving a beneficial effect on reducing congestion in the some areas of metropolitan

Lagos free of vehicles at particular times of the day.

In the present financial year the Lagos state Government plans to spend a total of N474.5m on both recurrent and capital expenditure with the higher outlays being made on education, health and public works. A total of N22m is being spent on the construction of additional (and much needed) low-income housing units.

The wisdom of federal government plans for spending in Lagos has been questioned. The establishment of a new federal capital in the centre of the country has been questioned. Similarly, there must be many residents in the socially deprived areas of Lagos who would prefer to see even more emphasis placed on tackling the more fundamental questions of Lagos state than on tourist developments.



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هذه من الأصل

BENUE AND PLATEAU

Tiv and Idoma are given chance to realize potential

By Martin Dent

From the boundary of the former eastern Region 100 miles south of the Benue river, at the highest point where its plateau 300 miles to the north lies a part of Nigeria that has played a most important role in the country's history.

This area of 40,000 sq miles, the former provinces of Benue and Plateau, detached from the fertile Hausa culture of the Muslim north met with the Christian culture of his own people. He was a man of the minorities and a northerner at the same time. His background and his character combined to enable him to give the leadership that Nigeria so desperately needed to preserve its unity and then to welcome back the Ibos.

In this task he was assisted by other Benue-Plateau figures such as the late chief of staff, Joe Alkali, the Federal Commissioner, Tarka, and the head of the federal foreign service, Edwin Ogo.

Jos has always been a cosmopolitan city with a liberal ethos composed as it is almost exclusively of "strangers to the soil". Before the war the Ibos had comprised more than half the population and when it was over Gomwalki, the state governor, was welcomed to welcome them back. Likewise Makurdi, the town in Benue, rapidly recovered its Ibos.

Internally, however, the state fared less well. Gomwalki, a graduate who had eventually joined the police force as General Gowon.

The people of Plateau are more tribally varied and less numerous than those of Benue. The Bwos alone numbered more than 200,000. The Angas, the Yergas, the Sura, the Arikas, the people of Wesa and a host of other small groups, with their separate identity contrasted with the large tribal groups of Benue, the Tiv and the Idoma.

The Tiv numbered nearly two million out of the four million or five million people joined the peoples of Plateau in the state. They were few, with whom they had

feared by their Plateau far more in common. The small emirates of Lafia, Nasarawa and Keffi were taken out of Benue and joined to Plateau.

Wukari, despite its majority of Tiv population, was removed from Benue and added to Gongola to the east. Benue was, however, much enriched by the addition to the state of the dynamic and developed people of Jos, whose territory stretches as far as the east bank of the Niger, and who had felt a little left out in the predominantly Yoruba character of Kwara to which they had previously belonged.

Makurdi, so long neglected as a town, became at last a centre and headquarters for a state of Benue and Jos. Tiv and Idoma have found their chance to show what they can do in a state in which they are no longer bereft of power. Both Benue and Plateau have military governors from outside the states appointed by the Federal Government, but otherwise the senior people are representatives of all parts of the state.

Jos, the capital of Plateau, was founded for tin, and the tin-mining community left its mark in the attractive houses and gardens, the layout and in better facilities than those in any other comparable town in Nigeria.

Its social structure is peculiarly liberal and cosmopolitan. It combines intense civic vitality and corporate sense with the existence of effective ethnic associations among its inhabitants, who keep closely to those of their own group and expect to return to their home areas when they retire.

However, the effect is not divisive because of the number of cross-cutting associations of religious, social, economic or sporting kind, and because of the wisdom of each group in cooperating with others.

The town is also an industrial and training centre and has a fair amount of light industry - tyre retreading, soft drinks and so on. There is a proposal for a brewery.

With the present dramatic increase in the prices of both Plateau and Benue, in the 13 years from independence to 1973 their secondary school population rose from 800 to 12,000 and continues to increase rapidly.

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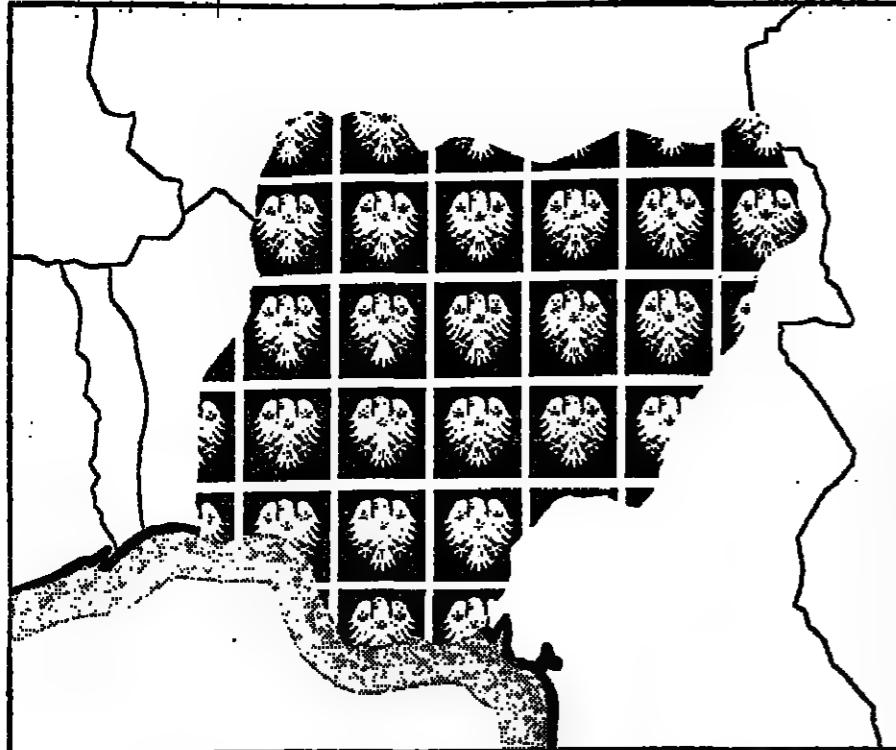
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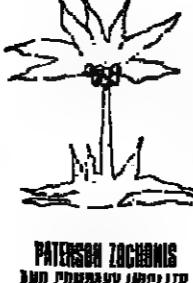
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by Edward Poulton

Sokoto state, gateway to north-western Nigeria and formerly one of the most isolated regions of the federation, is learning fast to accommodate its traditional custody of the seat of Islam in Nigeria with a desperate need for modern secular education and industrialisation.

The home of Sultan Abubakar III, descendant of the Islamic reformer Shehu Usman Dan Fodio and spiritual leader of all Nigerian Muslims, Sokoto has existed as a state only since February 1976, when, with Niger state to the south, it was created from the former North-western state.

The fact that Sokoto city was the capital of the former north-west and could therefore accommodate the physical needs of the new administration has barely compensated for the loss of the functionaries of Niger state origin who moved to Minna to set up their own government.

Although the two states still operate some common services, it will take several years for Sokoto to be able to meet fully its own manpower needs.

In a country seeking to cement its post-civil war unity before the programmed return to civilian rule in October 1979 it has become unfashionable to talk of ethnic composition in political terms. However, the roads north to Niger and the Sahara and south to Zaria, Kaduna and the coast—are good enough to carry the overland freight convoys from Europe and still attract travellers away from the hassle of domestic flying, and the rural electrification programme should bring power to 11 additional cities within the present financial year.

In statistical terms, Sokoto has, in only two years, more than quadrupled the number of children going into pri-

state's population remains the 1963 census figure of about 4,500,000. (The late head of state, General Murtala Muhammad, cancelled the discredited 1973 census and ordered the earlier figures to be used for planning purposes.) But a quick tally of the estimated population in each of the 19 local government administrations in the state produces a total of about 6,500,000.

The state Governor, Colonel Umaru Alhaji Muhammad, has made education the first priority in a government area which, more than any other in the federation, is suffering from a critical manpower shortage at the technical and middle executive levels. All the ministries are badly understaffed, the ultra-modern television station is working successfully with less than half its complement and several departments of the young university, just beginning its first academic year, have only one lecturer.

The problems of services and communications which confronted Sokoto state when it was created last year are gradually being overcome by short and medium-term capital investment schemes under the present five-year development plan. A new visitor is sur-

prised by the greenness and well-watered public gardens of the capital city of one of Nigeria's drier states.

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SOKOTO

Education and industry reach isolated seat of Islam



Hundreds of fishermen, using hollow gourds as combined buoys and containers, plunge into the river during the annual fishing festival at Argungu, south-west of Sokoto. The heaviest catch wins a prize.

mary school. From a first-year intake of just over 22,000 in 1975 the figure has jumped to about 100,000 last September. This is mainly because of the launching of the federal Government's universal primary education scheme, but the scheme would have been far less successful without the active support of the state Government. A significant number of the new pupils are girls whose mothers and older sisters are in purdah.

The total of 2,500 primary schools (an increase of 304

over the number existing only a year ago) now holds almost 278,000 children, and as far as possible the education authorities are holding the size of classes down to a maximum of 40 children.

This is not always possible because of a shortage of both teachers and classrooms, and the Ministry cannot afford to turn people away after months of persuading parents to send their children to school.

The bottleneck comes at the end of the primary education period, for at the moment the state has only 27 secondary schools with an enrolment of about 20,000 stu-

dents, plus 25 teachers' training colleges. Until last year there were only four secondary schools for girls.

At the further education level, Sokoto has so far provided only 86 students for the technical manpower training courses which in the past few weeks have seen several thousand young Nigerians flying to Europe and the United States for specialist courses.

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dents, plus 25 teachers' training colleges. Until last year there were only four secondary schools for girls.

Meanwhile 80 per cent of the population is still working the land, when agricultural production is divided between subsistence and cash-crop farming.

Like the other northern states, Sokoto has suffered from the tragic Sahel drought, which in neighbouring countries has seen the destruction of thousands of cattle and the break-up of established communities.

Several dozen villages are reported to have disappeared during the past five years of light rains, and this year's weather will not make life any easier for those farmers who have managed to bid their ground so far.

The state Government is working on a programme which aims to grow groundnuts, tobacco and cotton back to the traditional subsistence crops more appropriate to the federal Government's Operation Feed the Nation programme. Fertilizers, seeds and insecticides are being distributed freely and the Government has already started a system of tractor hiring and easy leases for smallholders.

In parallel to the state government's developments the federal Government has started work on the Benue-Cross River project, which is designed to irrigate 70,000 acres by 1980 and by the state and federal governments and the World Bank, should soon bring improved amenities to 3,300 sq km in the Gusa area to make life easier for 85,000 small farmers.

The author is Agence France Presse correspondent in Lagos.

GONGOLA

It's a long, long way to commute to Lagos

by David Williams

In April as year five of Nigeria's 12 states were divided an area of a total of 19. Though the federal Government was willing to help financially, the establishment of a new administration complete with ministries and agencies was difficult for some new states because of lack of staff.

Gongola, bordering Cameroun, one of three carved out of the huge North East State, was one of them. At Gongola's capital, Yola, Lagos seems far away. The seat of the Lokoja of Adamawa, one of the great emirs.

It all new state capitals of the state is taken from a history of the great emirs which divides Gongola in two.

State government offices, however, are spread over a large area, in a variety of buildings, and there is no other centre from which officials can commute to the state capital.

Demand for water in Yola has been so great that one gained the impression that there was no time for it to settle in the filter beds. It came straight through the tap from the Benue river, rich and brown. Despite handicaps, an atmosphere of enthusiasm has developed, as in other new states. As Colonel Jegu said, the state was not

established because its people happen to belong to the same group or tribe. The variety of its three million people is almost as bewildering as that of the former North East State or in the Northern Region before that.

The governor has said that the object of creating the state was to bring state government, which would mean social services and those activities affecting daily life, closer to the people.

If at the beginning, the only evidence of development resulting from establishing new states is in the houses and offices provided for officials, it does not

work because their work cannot be effective without the accommodation.

Colonel Jegu, aged 36, comes from the royal house of Gwandum, in Sokoto State in the north-west. No state government in Nigeria now comes from the state where he is stationed. He commanded a company early in the civil war and in 1970 became commander of the 26th Brigade.

The nine commissioners appointed by him were drawn from all parts of the new state. Among them were two doctors of medicine. All stated have drawn heavily on the universities for their commissioners.

Dr Samuel Crowther Aleyedemo, from Numan, son of a Christian pastor, an educationist, has been associate director of the West African Examinations Council and Dr Saad Abubekar, from Jalingo, an historian, was senior lecturer in history at Ahmadu Bello University.

If there was talent at the top, there were weaknesses lower down. Some months after the state was established, the ministry of Works had only one quantity surveyor and one architect. The ministry depended heavily on foreign engineers even if several native engineers even if several native engineers could be recognised that their work cannot be effective without the accommodation.

The medical services also depended heavily upon foreign doctors, since there were only four of state origin. The state, however, is well off for nurses and the medical services are fairly evenly spread to deal with the great killer diseases, particularly malaria.

There are also mobile clinics for the nomads who are an important group in the state. The Ministry of Education has been concerned to fit them into universal primary education.

The state is purely agricultural, depending largely upon small farmers and pastoralists. But it is also the site for one of Nigeria's, and Africa's, greatest agricultural projects. That is the Savannah Sugar Company plantation, owned jointly by the states formed out of the old North East State—Gongola, Bauchi and Borno.

The Government would be spending about N105m, 7 per cent more than in the previous year, on the recurrent revenue and N168m on the capital budget. Of the recurrent revenue, more than N80m came as the state's statutory allocation from the federal Government. Overall, a deficit of about N20.5m was expected.

Gongola, as is the case with other states, has been revising its development plan for 1975-80. The total estimated cost is now N444m or more than two thirds of the cost of the plan for the whole of the former North East State.

As in other states, education in Gongola has most money spent on it, about N64m, which is about 15 per cent of the budget.

The number of classrooms has almost been doubled for universal primary education and the number of pupils in primary schools has increased from 94,000 to 252,000.

More than N14m will be spent this year on additional classrooms and to meet the shortage of teachers an emergency training programme for about 1,000 of them was put into effect last year.



Horsemen in colourful robes, mounted on equally gorgeously caparisoned steeds, parade before demonstrating a cavalry charge at the annual Sallah Festival in Nigeria. The festival, which marks the end of the feast of Ramadan, is held in a number of northern towns.

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The final section of the report looks at contemporary cultural activities in the west, north and east of the federation
YORUBAS

Old crafts come to terms with modern ways

by Kevin Carroll

The Yoruba, 12 million strong, are the chief people of south-west Nigeria. Their traditional arts survive with varying degrees of vitality, despite sophisticated modern art.

The most notable craft is woodcarving, and the Yoruba carvers' tradition was the most vigorous in Africa. But where hundreds of carvers worked early this century, I doubt that we could find 50 today. They worked for the chiefs, the cults and the people.

Nowadays, however, chiefs build in modern materials and feel little need for carved pillars and doors. Odeles, or carvers from the cults, have become a trickle as more Yoruba are now, nominally at least, Muslim or Christian.

Along the border of Dahomey, now called Benin, the Egbado Yoruba carvers still produce cult objects. Their Gelede masks represent not only traditional subjects but also ladies and a craft, prominent politicians and Christian subjects. Among the Egbado Yoruba at Abeokuta, there is a guild of carvers working for both the cults and the tourists.

But it is the carvers of Edo, in south-east Nigeria who have most successfully adapted to the new Nigeria. The church was the first to give them modern patronage when, 30 years ago, Bandele was asked to carve Christian subjects. He was the son of Areogun of Oei, one of the greatest Yoruba carvers known by name to the outside world. Increasing orders prompted Bandele to take on as assistant Lamidi, son of a noted carver, Fakayeye of Ila Orangun.

Bandele remains a member of the traditional religion and Lamidi is a devout Muslim. Alongside their Christian carvings, both continued to produce for the chiefs and the cults. French orders from these sources were few.

Several years later, as their work became more widely known, they were given contracts for work on official buildings, for example, pillars and doors for the Idemba gatehouse of the Oba's palace at Ile, in 1953. Chief Awolowo, the first Premier of the Western Region, encouraged the use of Yoruba art and in 1956 Lamidi Fakayeye carved the furniture for the House of Assembly and the House of Chiefs at Ibadan, as well as panels for the Premier's office.

Encouraged by improved prospects, Bandele and Lamidi took on apprentices. After their three years' training, these apprentices would continue to work with them as journeymen until they found their own feet and went off to start their own workshops.

Now 30 or more carvers of the Oei school can be found, many of them working in the big centres—Lagos, Ibadan, Oyo, Ilorin, Ile, Oshogbo—and each with his own apprentices. A considerable amount of their work is sold to foreigners but, increasingly, contracts come from state and church and other sources within Nigeria.

After the introduction of universal primary education in southern Nigeria 25 years ago, most of the younger car-



Right: Daniel Bamidele working on a cement mural for the Ibadan Cultural Centre. Traditional woodcarvers find it easy to transfer their skill to fresh cement. Top: another of his murals for the centre representing Yoruba musicians and dancers. Above: one of a set of Stations of the Cross, the burial of Jesus, carved by Joseph Imaile.

vers are now literate, and weaving and a large amount of some go on to secondary or brilliant Ocene cloth is poor roads. school, making money by sold all over Nigeria. There Udo, died recently, is no similar large centre in it is no longer granted that Yoruba land, but the women European music would be continue to weave in many used in Nigerian churches, places; for example in Ijebu-ode they weave cloth and that all that was necessary was to translate the words suitably into Yoruba. In the first half of this century, certain churchmen, for example, the Rev. Mr. Bamidele, and Mr. Adebayo, and Mr. T. K. Phillips, the organist of the Anglican cathedral in Lagos, began to popularise more suitable music in Yoruba. They continued to use European scales and harmonies, however. This music had a wide success. The independent churches, which have grown rapidly in the past 30 years, make much use of Nigerian instruments and dance rhythms, but have been unwilling to adapt the real religious music of Yoruba tradition.

Traditional crafts continue to flourish, as even the most sophisticated person will find a range of traditional robes. Industry produces imitations of the old textile, but cannot imitate the beautiful "crusy" effect of the handwork. There is probably far more handweaving today than there was 100 years ago. The weavers cannot compete with modern looms in the production of cheap cloth, but they have found their place in the luxury market.

Thirty years ago most women wove their indigo and white striped cloth at home on the vertical, broad loom. Now the use of this loom is restricted to certain areas. Okene, an Igbira town on the borders of Yoruba land, is a flourishing centre for women's home-



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The author, a Liverpool-born priest of the African Mission Society, has worked in West Africa since 1943. He was appointed by his society to study and experiment with Yoruba crafts and music from 1947 to 1954 and has continued his work with Yoruba artists since. He has written Yoruba Religious Carving, published by Chapman's in London in 1967.



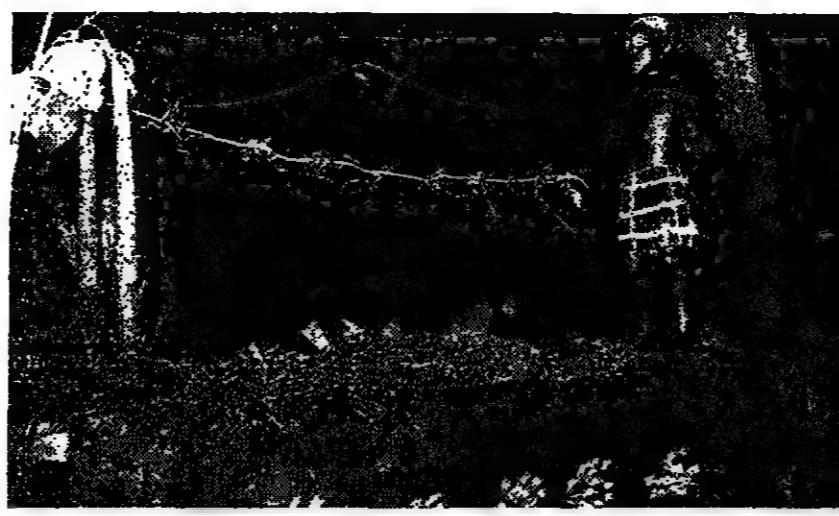
AGRICULTURE.—To boost Operation Feed the Nation Campaign (OFN) land development scheme was introduced in the State. Picture shows a tractor clearing the land ready for planting.



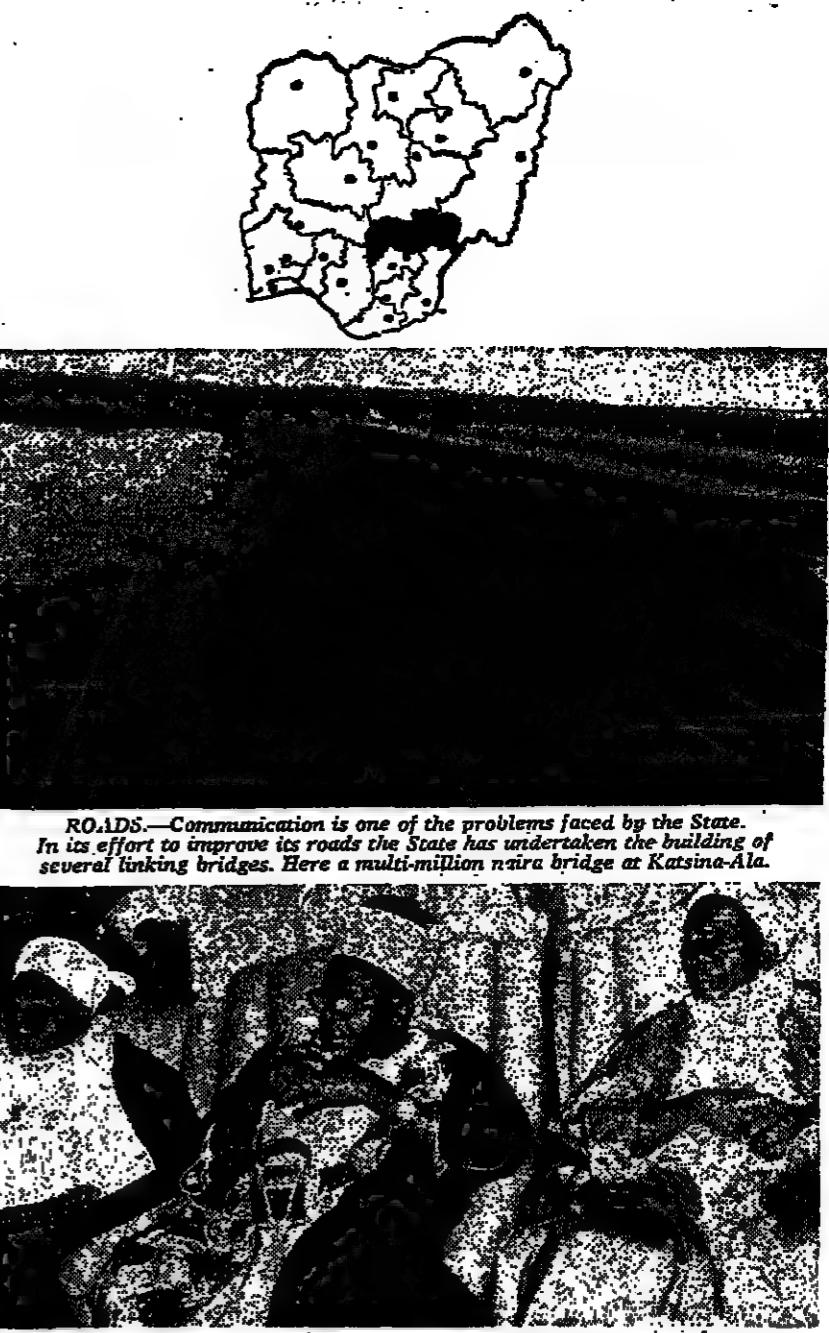
EDUCATION.—With the introduction of UPE education is no longer the privilege of the rich few.



GOVERNOR.—The Military Governor of Benue State, Colonel Abdullahi Shelleng who handles the affairs of the State.



CULTURE.—The State is rich in culture. The Cultural Division of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Information entertains people in Makurdi to cultural nights.



ROADS.—Communication is one of the problems faced by the State. In its effort to improve its roads the State has undertaken the building of several linking bridges. Here a multi-million naira bridge at Katsina-Ala.



TRADITIONAL RULERS.—The three first class traditional rulers in Benue State. From left to right are the Attah of Igala, CBE, CON, Alhaji Aliyu Obaje; the Tor Viz, Mr. Gondo Abar and the Och'Idoma, Mr. Abraham Ajana Ukpabi.

BENUE STATE OF NIGERIA

EIGHTEEN MONTHS OF BENUE STATE

Benue State came into existence on 3rd February, 1976 when seven new states were created in Nigeria by the Federal Military Government.

It has an area of 69,740 square kilometres and a population of 3,041,194 (1963 population census). Almost rectangular in shape, Benue State is located in the middle of the country and is surrounded by six states of the Federation. The Plateau State lies to its north while it is surrounded in the south by Anambra and Cross River States. It has a common boundary with Gongola to the east and Bendel and Kwa States to the west.

MAIN FEATURES: The State derives its name from the River Benue which is also one of its main physical features. An important tributary of the River Benue is the River Nsukka-Ala. The State stretches across the transition belt between forest and savanna consisting of undulating hills, grassy open spaces in the north and derived forests in the southern portion.

There are two marked seasons—a hot and dry season with short spell of harmattan (November—March) and a wet season. No part of the State suffers from extremes of temperature.

PEOPLE: There are three main ethnic groups: Tiv, Idoma and Igbos. The bulk of Nigerian Armed Forces come from these practical and enterprising tribes. Almost 80% of the population engage in farming and given the abundance of fertile land that we have, it is not surprising that Benue State forms a substantial portion of Nigeria. The main food crops are yams, guineas, cassava, rice and maize; the major cash crops are henbane, soyabean and cotton. The majority of the population are Christians.

INITIAL PROBLEMS: The State was one of the first of the new States to move into their Headquarters and started working. It was a period of sacrifice. Apart from the acute shortage of office and housing accommodation, there was the need to harmonize administrative practice, rules and edicts inherited from Plateau and Kwa States to suit the needs of the new State.

It was necessary to provide office accommodation as a matter of urgency and contracts were awarded almost immediately for over 1,000 office units of simple structure at a cost of nearly N1 million. All of the offices have been completed and are now being used.

Next came the problem of providing reasonable housing for the staff. Contracts were soon given for the construction of about 200 Senior Staff Quarters and over 300 junior and intermediate staff quarters in Makurdi at a total cost of N7,500,000. This project was handled by indigenous contractors and several have been completed and allocated to officers.

In Local Government headquarters, about 40 senior staff quarters and about 200 junior and intermediate housing units are under construction. These are expected to be ready before the end of this year.

In addition, the Housing Authority, one of the thirteen parastatals set up by the State Government, is making arrangements to embark on the execution of the Federal and State Governments housing units for the masses.

Ministries such as Agriculture, Health and Justice are simultaneously going on with their individual programmes of building offices and staff quarters. In Local Government areas of the State, meanwhile, designs for the State Secretariate are almost completed and the first phase of the project is estimated to cost N7.6 million.

WATER SUPPLY: To further improve the working and living conditions of the people in the State, the Government has made various contract awards for infrastructure. This includes contracts for the expansion of water supply schemes for Makurdi which has raised water supply ten-fold to 250,000 gallons per day. Expansion schemes in Idah and Anka are almost completed while work has started on the new water supply for Dekina. In addition, contract has been awarded for a 4 million gallons per day water supply scheme for Gboko-Yander at a cost of N23 million. The scheme will also serve the proposed Cement Factory.

Eight other towns, including Adikpo, Vandekya, Okpoko, Ijeh, Utikon and Jato-Aku, are to be supplied through another contract award of nearly N3 million. Work on the water supply at Wannu, Zaki-Biam and Alfa is almost completed while that of Igumale is progressing satisfactorily.

The State Government hopes to maintain this pace of development of water supply schemes so that by the end of the current plan period, water supply will no longer be a major problem in the State.

ROAD DEVELOPMENT: The State inherited a very poor network of roads and consequently the provision of good bitumen surfaced roads is one of its priorities. The State government has already awarded contracts for bitumen surfacing of the following roads:

- a. Gboko-Adikpo-Jato-Ala for N16 million
- b. Anka-Ogbo-Abejukoro for N14 million
- c. Abukoro-Ijeh-Arung for N11 million
- d. Otukpo-Utikon-Agila for N8 million
- e. Katsina-Ala-Jato-Ala for N 7 million
- f. Arufu-Ahinsi (an inheritance from former Egbue-Plateau Government) N 6 million

The Federal Government has also embarked on three federal government road programmes affecting Benue State to wit: Makurdi-Yander, Ogoja-Katsina-Ala and Enugu-Oukpo. These roads are presently under construction.

ELECTRICITY PROGRAMME: Benue State will derive some substantial benefits when the Federal Power Projects are completed. Transmission lines existing or under construction will connect some major towns such as Idah, Anka, Oukpo, Gboko, Katsina-Ala and Makurdi to the national grid system. It is hoped that these areas will be switched on by December this year.

Through its Rural Electricity Board the State Government recently awarded contracts for the supply of electricity to 16 towns at a total cost of N31 million.

In Makurdi, the State capital, a 3-megawatts power station is now under construction and the people of Makurdi will enjoy this Christmas with an undisturbed flow of electricity.

EDUCATION: Compared to other Northern States, we are advanced in education. Last September the Ministry of Education enrolled a total of 140,275 children into Year One for the launching of the UPE Scheme. This was thrice the number of entrants for the previous school session.

At the moment there are 88 post-primary institutions against 80 at the inception of the State, then largely controlled by either Voluntary Agencies, Communities or private individuals.

In order to harmonize and control these institutions more effectively, a State Schools Board was established. The State Schools Board has been able to arrest the unpleasant incidence of late payment of teachers salaries.

Secondary Schools have been expanded to six streams in some cases to cater for ever increasing numbers of primary school leavers. Five new Secondary Schools recently admitted its first pioneering students.

Before the creation of new States last year, there was no single post-primary institution in Benue State. Now, there are three such institutions namely: the Advanced Teachers College, Katsina-Ala; the School of Basic Studies, Ugbokolo and the Murtala College of Arts, Science and Technology, Makurdi. Each of these institutions are one-year-old and opened with intakes of 500. The Federal College of Technology, Idah, started early September this year. The State Scholarship Board has awarded scholarships to over 1,900 qualified candidates in various fields, tenable in local or overseas institutions of Higher Learning.

Realizing the importance of education in the State the Government has set aside N101 million of its N302.6 million this fiscal year for the Ministry of Education. This places the Ministry on top of all others in the State's Financial Budget for this year.

AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES: Realizing that agriculture is the mainstay of the State's economy, the government has undertaken many projects aimed at assisting the farmers to attain better yields. These include the sale of fertilizers, pesticides, improved seedling at heavily subsidized rates as well as providing mechanized services to farmers.

It is expected that during this financial year, 32 metric tons of fertilizers would be acquired and distributed to the farmers; while some N1.5 million would be used for purchases of tractors and other agricultural machinery with which over 28,000 hectares of land will be put under cultivation annually for the production of yams, maize, guineas, rice, cassava, millet and cash crops such as oil palm, cotton and coffee.

Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) programme is receiving the attention the scheme deserves. Many communities, institutions and private individuals in the State have embraced the programme. But to further boost the spirit of the OFN, the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources has embarked on land clearing for farmers at minimal charges.

It is a fact that Benue State is one of Nigeria's major food producing areas and the inhabitants are renowned for their farming. The Government has therefore been trying to build on this tradition through programmes that would enable the farmers to help himself. In this direction, the Government has spent about N35 million on land clearing and development in all areas of the State. Commissioners responsible for Agriculture in the 19 States recently visited Benue State primarily to inspect and study this programme which is being widely acclaimed throughout the country.

The World Bank is sponsoring Avariba Agricultural Development Project, which will benefit the farming population of the people of the State.

The State Government has taken much keen interest in animal health and extension. N6 million has been set aside for animal health projects in the State which include poultry and piggers development. Similarly, extension services to fishermen has been intensified with a view to ensure higher yields in fish production to tackle the problem of protein deficiency.

NATURAL RESOURCES: The State is blessed with abundant valuable but largely uncapped mineral and natural resources. The different resources are summarized in the table below:

Minerals	Name	Location	Possible Industry
Coal		Okpoko, Anka LGA	Chemicals, e.g. Sulphuric Acid. Ammonia for preparing fertilizers, paints, mining, steel industry, domestic uses.
Cement	Yander, Gboko LGA	Ogboya, Odoekpo, Dekina LGA, Oukpo, Oukpo in Oukpo LGA	Concrete, cement, lime manufacture.
Marble		Agila, Igumale and Ekuwu, Idah LGA	Ceramics, building, carvings, tiles, monuments, chemicals, paints manufacture.
Petroleum		Okogbo, Idah LGA	Refinery, petrol, kerosene, distillations, chemicals, etc.
Beniseed		Gboko, Makurdi and Katsina-Ala LGAs	Crushing for oil extraction.
Soyabeans		Same as above	Crushing for oil extraction.
Palm kernel		Oukpo, Dekina, Anka and Idah LGA	Crushing for oil extraction.
Palm oil		Same as above	Soap making, margarine, margarine.
Rice		All over the State	Rice mills.
Citrus fruits		Gboko, Katsina-Ala, Oukpo, LGA	Canning and bottling.
Cotton seed		Oukpo, Dekina LGA	Crushing for oil extraction.
Coffee (robusta)		Gboko, K-A, Dekina LGA	Beverages.
Livestock		All over the State	Abattoir, canning.
Goats and sheep		Ponds, rivers, streams	Fish canning.
Fish		All over the State	Canning.
Pigs			

COMMERCE: A total sum of N4.4 million has been earmarked for commerce out of which it is expected that a State Commercial Bank would be established at a cost of N1.4 million. Another N1.5 million will go into the construction of Co-operative Shops in major towns in the State. Appeals have been made for more commercial Banks to open branches throughout the State in order to further boost the economy of the State.

At present there are ten commercial banks operating in the State: Barclays Bank has three branches in Makurdi, Gboko and Idah. The Standard Bank has only a branch in the state capital which is served by the African Continental Bank, Bank of the North and the New Nigerian Bank. The Bank of the North has branches in Gboko and Anka while the National Bank of Nigeria has a base in Oukpo.

HEALTH. Here emphasis has been placed on the supply of drugs to the existing hospitals for which N4 million has been provided. Generally the main concern of the Government has been the provision of health facilities to the remotest parts of the State. This fiscal year Comprehensive Health Centres at Adikpo, Oju, Udei and Vandekya have been approved while twenty Health Clinics are to be established in various other parts of the State. Contracts have been awarded for the construction of eight of such Health Centres which will be situated in the environs of the Services and General Hospitals. In addition, the three new Rural Health Centres at Adoru, Abocu and Agashia will be opened for full services during this fiscal year.

The Makurdi General Hospital as well as existing hospitals are being expanded to cope with growing numbers of patients. Designs for a 4,500-bed specialist hospital at Makurdi and the new 300-bed Katsina-Ala and Oukpo hospitals are ready.

The Government has through the Federal Ministry of Finance placed orders for some of the most modern hospital equipment from and internationally reputable European firms. The equipment, valued at N10 million, will be paid for through a 15-year medium-term loan.

A School of Nursing and a School of Health Technology with intake of 450 students each have been opened in Makurdi and Idah.

CULTURAL HERITAGE: Benue is noted for its dances. Tiv and Idoma dances have won acclaim for both the State and Nigeria in cultural festivals. Tiv are exuberant: A Tiv man can at once be boisterous and formal, casual and friendly. He can improvise a song and a dance for every occasion and a number of these are imitations of the habits and movements of some animals and of human beings. *Insogu*, one of the well-known symbolic dances, simulates bodily disfigurement due to disease. The dancers try to effect the most bizarre bodily contortions. This dance group has represented Nigeria at the First African Arts Festival Dakar and has toured USA, Canada and Britain. The group also featured during the recent ECOWAC as a side attraction.

Every town has its Sapele group, an all-night dance characterized by serpentine movements. By far the most popular is a dance-cum-puppet show called *Kwagh-hir*. This features elaborate and intricate puppetry, the nearest to masquerade for a tribe with non-ancestral worship, *Kwagh-hir*.

does not only depict Tiv proficiency in handicraft but their ingenuity in manipulating the various shapes and sizes of animals, causing them to move, to jump, to knit, to smoke a pipe and even to depict soldiers executing a condemned highway robber.

The Idoma are noted for their attachment to their dead ancestors whom they worship communally as *Aleku*. These festivals usually take place in the dry season. The Agiles celebrate a *One Festival* in April which lasts for four days. In each, there are lots of rituals, dances and spectacles to watch. Girls usually come to their husband's *Idoma* houses during these periods. The leisurely period following the harvest and the cessation from heavy farm work is a time for recreation, increased tempo in social activities including the emergence of new dance groups. *Odebaru* from Anka is one of these that has outclassed others. It is danced mainly by youths and has represented former Benue-Plateau State and Nigeria in All Africa Arts Festival in Kenya and Addis Ababa in 1972. Other festivals celebrated at Agakpa in June, Ujoh, the new year feast in August, and Oya marking the end of the rainy season in September each year.

The Igala have numerous agricultural festivals designed to ensure abundant harvest. In them, they make sacrifices to their ancestors beseeching them for fertility and prosperity. The most important of these is *Egu*-festival, the new year feast in July or August. In the Egu-festival masks appear. *Ochukwu* hunting ceremony, is celebrated after the grass is ready for burning and is accompanied by much singing-making. Immediately after *Ochukwu*, a week-long celebration during which the *Afala* publicly appears to address the people. A day after the end of this year is *Imigbo* ceremony in memory of the young beautiful daughter of *Ayesha*. In the legend when *Ayesha*'s kingdom was faced with imminent defeat at the hands of the *Bini*, a high priest prescribed her sacrifice to avoid the imminent doom. Her father could not bring himself to do this but when *Ujoh* heard of the prescription, she insisted on offering her life to save the land. She subsequently became a guardian goddess who watched over the destiny of the Igala. Her statue, conspicuously located in the centre of Idah, was the scene of worship during the festival, now abolished. From *Ujoh* district in Idah, LGA comes *Aku*, *Ajone*, a mysterious masquerade that contracts, elongates, doubles itself and performs wonderful feats.

TRADITIONAL RULERS: As a sign of respect the Administration has for Native Rulers and in recognition of their role for maintaining law and order, they are Presidents of the five Traditional Councils in the State.

TRADITIONAL COUNCILS: Attah of Igala Alhaji Aliyu Obaje CBE, CON, is Chairman of Idah and Dekina Traditional Councils. The Tor Viz, Mr. Gondo Abar and the Och'Idoma Mr. Abraham A. Ukpabi are the Chairmen of Tiv and Idoma Traditional Councils respectively. Eje of Anka Alhaji Yakubu Adaji is the President of Anka Traditional Council while Asuwa of Bassa Komo, Mr. Jusupi Ochukwu is the Head of Bassa.

LOCAL GOVERNMENTS: There are thirteen Local Government Councils in the State, which are development areas.

These are:

Name	Headquarters	Population figures
Anka	Anka	377,760
Bassa	Oguma	89,560
Dekina	Dekina	170,351
Gboko	Gboko	329,979
Gwer	Aliade	271,896
Idah	Idah	330,245
Katsina-Ala	Katsina-Ala	246,535
Kwande	Adikpo	347,889
Makurdi	Makurdi	263,210
Oju	Oju	153

OSHOGBO-IFE

Art workshops bring out unusual creative talents

by Michael Crowder

In Oshogbo and the near by university town of Ile-Ife, revered as the ancestral home of the Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria, flourishes a group of artists without formal Western training, employing many of its techniques and drawing inspiration from some of its ideas. This school, some of whose members have gained international reputations, has its origins in a series of art workshops organized by the Department of Extra-mural Studies at the University of Ibadan and later by the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ile.

The first workshop was held in Ibadan, but it was the series of workshops organized by the University of Oshogbo, who orga-

nized the workshops, there from 1962 to 1966, although not an artist himself, played a vital role in encouraging those who showed talent to continue in their new-found profession. He has also been chief publicist for the movement.

The week-long workshops, continuing workshop at Ile, were open to all-comers. Several of those who attended the Oshogbo workshops were members of the Duro Ladipo Opera Company, which was also sponsored by Ibadan's Department of Extra-mural Studies.

In the workshops the artists were encouraged to experiment in various media, including, at one workshop, etching equipment. Some who attended these sessions proved either to have no talent or else lost interest once the workshop had finished. Others like Jimoh Buraimoh, Muraina Oyelami, and Rufus Ogundele were so inspired and showed such remarkable creative talents that they continued their interest in art as a first living from the sales of their work and employment in other arts, particularly Duro Ladipo's folk opera company, as musicians, actors or dancers.

Few of the artists at these workshops had education much beyond early secondary school. And, until the workshop held at Ile from 1968 to 1971, most of them came from the immediate catchment area of Oshogbo. This writer remembers Twins-Seven arriving as an itinerant entertainer at a dance in Oshogbo. So remarkable were his dances, the more so because two figure sevens were sown on to the seat of his trousers, that I suggested he see Ulli Beier the next morning about the possibility of employment in the Duro Ladipo Opera Company. Soon afterwards he attended an art workshop and demonstrated an immediate talent as a creative artist, with remarkable imagination and a superb sense of colour.

Today there are about 25 artists who have emerged as

professional artists from the Oshogbo and Ile workshops. Some of them, like Jimoh Buraimoh, live exclusively from their art. Others like Twins-Seven have branched out running a popular band and standing successfully last year for election as a local government councillor. Some work for the civil service, others in artistic cooperatives like the Oguntimiehin Art Centre in Ile where a group of Oshogbo and Ile-trained artists have taken over a disused cocoa warehouse as their communal studio.

All have been heavily influenced by Suzanne Wenger, who lives in Oshogbo, and Georgina Beier, Ulli Beier's wife. All seek inspiration from each other, while trying to develop their own distinctive style and even medium which they try to "patent", rarely successfully. Thus Jimoh Buraimoh is mainly noted for the use he makes of a medium for his paintings, an idea derived from the Yoruba beaded crowns. Adebisi uses wool and silk applique much in the style of Mexican Indians, failing to acknowledge that there is no suggestion that it was from Mexico he received the idea.

Fola Sorunku, an Ile rather than an Oshogbo product, specializes in "drawings from the back". All are receptive to further training and some have since attended formal art school. Rufus Orishayomi, who attended the Ile workshop, financed himself at Bradford College of Technology. Some of the artists have made a great deal of money and have built their own houses and bought their own cars. Others hawk their latest prints, paintings and batiks around the houses of potential patrons—Nigerian and expatriate—rather in the manner of Hausa traders selling craft work. They hold one-man and collective exhibitions both within Nigeria and abroad. Recently Yinka Adeyemi and Jimoh Buraimoh exhibited at the Commonwealth Institute in London.

The author is visiting professor, University of Lagos.

Some have been perhaps repetitive if not imitative of themselves. Others, once they have found a formula that sells, seem to go no further. But now, about 15 years since the movement began, they are still a lively group producing work that this critic's mind forms a significant phase in the development of contemporary art in Nigeria.

Many supplement their income by playing in nightclubs or acting or dancing in university sponsored performing arts groups. They have a strong sense of community, often helping to sell each other's work, and the wealthier aiding the less successful. They also have their rivalries and their feuds.

In a sense they are the first contemporary Nigerian professional artists in that they derive their principal income from the sale of their work. In this they differ from the products of the Western-style art schools who by and large rely on reaching posts or employment as commercial artists for their main source of income.

Between some of the Western-trained artists and the Oshogbo-Ife artists there is, sadly, some antipathy, and even rivalry. This is not true of all Western-trained artists, some of whom, like Bruce Onobrakpeya and Irene Wangbojo, have actively helped them. Others like Agbogba Folarin have been inspired by their work as is best demonstrated in his superb copper panels for the University of Ile Conference Centre, which owe a clear debt to the work of Asiru, based in Oshogbo.

The antipathy relates perhaps on the one hand to the very success many of the Oshogbo artists have achieved without degree or diploma, and on the other to the fact that their art is exotic, emphasizing the "primitive" and mythical aspects of African culture.

Some have been perhaps repetitive if not imitative of themselves. Others, once they have found a formula that sells, seem to go no further. But now, about 15 years since the movement began, they are still a lively group producing work that this critic's mind forms a significant phase in the development of contemporary art in Nigeria.

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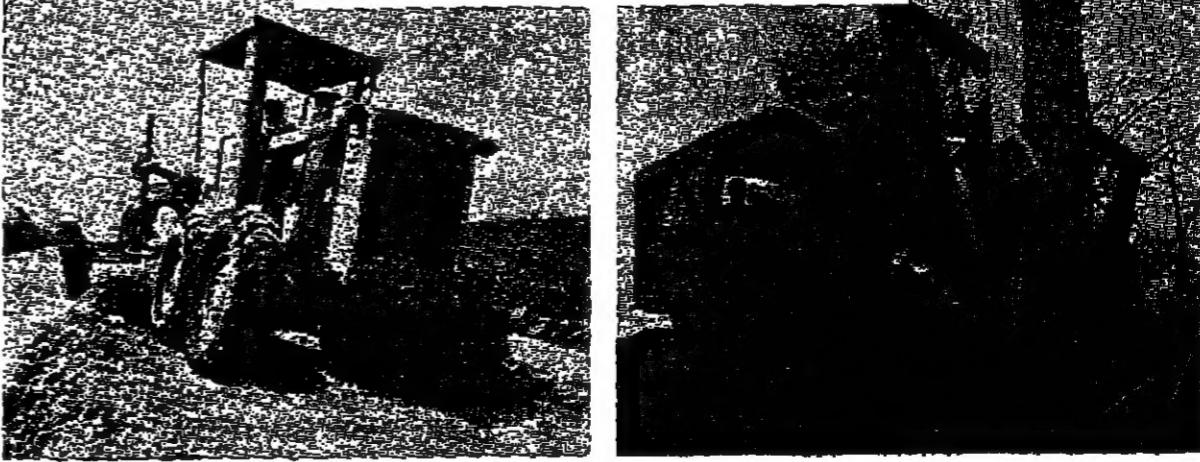


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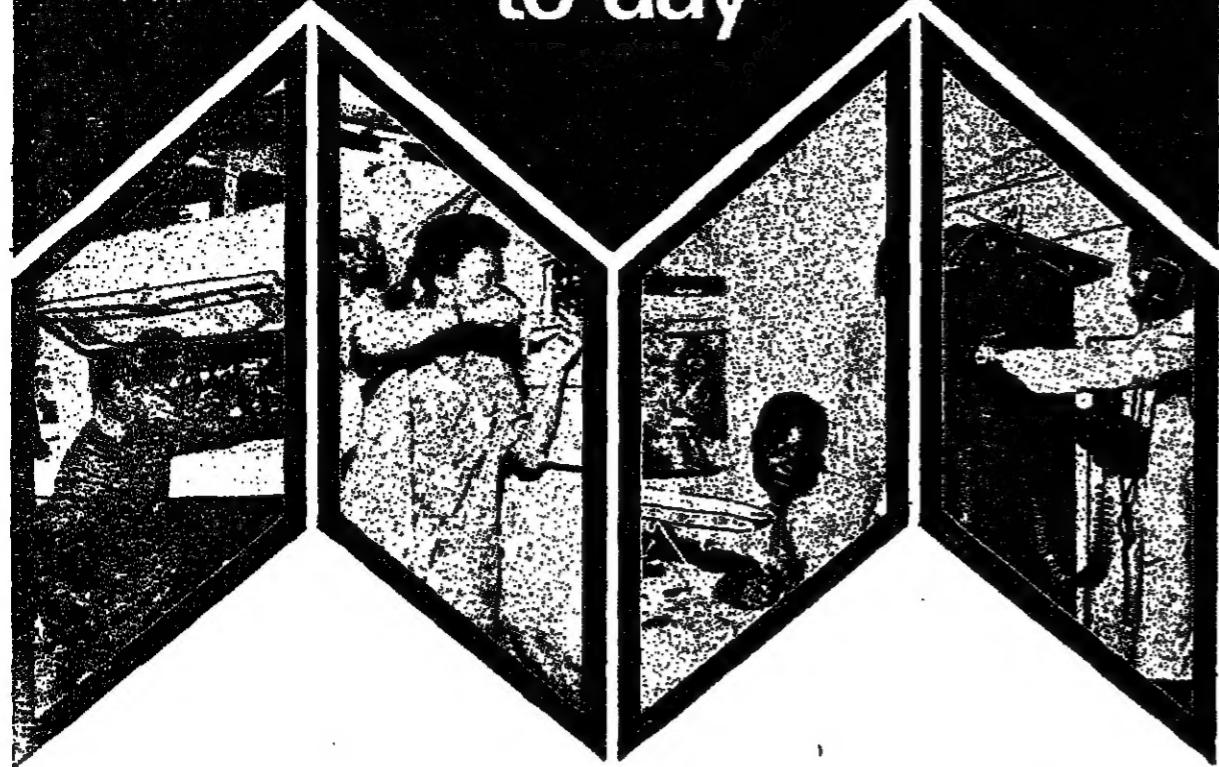
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by David Heathcote

In November 1972 a young, self-taught artist named Musa Yola completed several decorative murals in the Hausa village of Hunkuyi, in northern Nigeria.

One of them was on a small mosque belonging to Alhaji Abeshiyya, while a few yards away, on a large wall in the adjoining compound, the artist had placed portraits of two of Alhaji Abeshiyya's wives, two of his children, and his brother, shown equipped for hunting at night, with shotgun, lamp, and cartridge belt.

The appearance of Musa Yola's paintings was greeted in Hunkuyi, and other villages where he worked, with great enthusiasm. The pictures were a new experience, a dramatization of local life that was immensely impressive. The villages already had other wall decorations, but nothing like this.

Musa's range of subject matter was apparently unlimited, and the people whose portraits could be seen in the murals were delighted to find themselves so realistically portrayed, in what must have seemed to be a kind of permanent cinema show.

It was understandable that Musa Yola occasionally referred to himself as *mai hoc* (the photographer). The camera has been particularly influential in bringing about changes in Hausa attitudes towards representation, and in Musa's case his methods were especially close to photographic techniques, for his subjects were taken straight from life.

In 1931 the Wazir of Kano decided at an advisory meeting that as photographs cast no shadows he had no objection to their use in a proposed local newspaper.

Since then, as a result of closer links with Europe, the flow of pictorial images before the public eye has increased greatly. First came newspaper and magazine illustrations, and pictures on the printed wrappings of goods available in the markets; then advertising hoardings, the cinema, and eventually television, while portrait photography became established as one of the most flourishing of new urban trades.

The new imagery did not bring about a sudden, dramatic change in the character of Hausa art, though it certainly prepared the way for innovations, such as those introduced by Musa Yola. What it did do was to encourage a widening of the range of imagery used by Hausas who worked at the traditional arts.

At about the same time that the Wazir of Kano decided on the acceptability of newspaper photographs, wall decorators were given the instructions of the Emir of Kano who, elaborately decorating with moulded and painted reliefs a bedroom and living room in the old treasury, in the Mandawari quarter.

These rooms were to be used by a Kano princess, whose husband had been treasurer. The decorations included several symbols connected with the palace, such as large sandals, spears, shotguns, and ceremonial aluminum ewers.

More striking, and distinctly more ambitious and up to date, was the representation of what may have been intended as a steamboat or, more likely, a locomotive. Images of this kind, including aircraft and cars, also came to be used in the ornamentation of Hausa woven cloth and hand embroidered caps, though in these contexts they tended to be simpler than the Kano treasury example and easier to decipher.

So far every significant development in Hausa art has been in some way associated with a traditional craft. The most spectacular changes have occurred in wall decoration and embroidery. No one has yet attempted an experiment among the Hausa such as that of the summer schools and Mbari Club at Oshogbo, in southern Nigeria, which created a centre for the production of works of art that were easily sold to foreigners.

The tourist trade in Hausaland has to some extent encouraged the production of new kinds of leatherwork and metal ornaments, but the most important changes in the Hausa arts have come about as a result of indigenous needs.

Apart from a wall that Musa Yola painted for me in a museum room I was arranging in Zaria, and a small batch of easel paintings he made when I was unable to find him another commission, all his work was done for local Hausa people.

Local demand and the extension of local techniques have led to developments in other areas. Some of the simply-made furniture sold in Hausa markets is now decorated by means of a modified traditional method

HAUSAS

New art dramatizes local village life



A Hausa man wearing a cap embroidered by a young pupil with a design that includes a car and a mosque. Right: a BA fine art student working in the textile studio of Ahmadu Bello University. Top: Musa Yola with his mural on a village house. The painting contains several portraits.

used in the making of horse trappings: the use of applied aluminium, in this case obtained from discarded kerosene tins.

Aluminium is now used to make the long trumpets that announce the arrival of an emir. Formerly they were made of copper. Other modern materials and methods are also used. Imported lurex thread can now be found in hand-woven Hausa cloth, and imported sewing machines are an established feature of Hausa tailoring.

Yet in spite of the adaptability of some of the craftsmen, and the use of old-established techniques, one cannot be optimistic about the future of most of the Hausa crafts...

Some are in rapid decline, some are clearly dying. The amount of decorated weaving, wood carving, and pottery seems to be constantly diminishing, and it is mainly old men who are keeping some of the crafts going.

In the case of embroidery, however, the opposite seems to be true. Embroidery still attracts many young people for it is a pleasant way of making a little money, and the outlay on materials can be small.

Young boys can invariably be seen during the day sitting at the side of city streets, stitching away at caps. Most of these young embroiderers cater for the demand for multicoloured caps, which during the past three decades have been replacing the older turbans.

Each cap is slightly different. Apart from locally inspired designs, patterns are borrowed from Borno, in north-eastern Nigeria, and farther afield, from Mecca and North Africa.

To encourage the sale of their caps, embroiderers give them topical names, such as those of prominent personalities or important events. One design, which became popular when Nigeria changed over from driving on the left to driving

on the right, was called "Keep to the right", and they have also taken to decorating pillow cases and bed covers with ornamental sewing that is often lively in design and original in its subject matter.

If the traditional Hausa crafts continue to decline there is still the question of what present-day Hausa art students may eventually achieve. There are now many of them studying in the degree and diploma courses of the fine art department of Ahmadu Bello University, where they learn techniques such as silk-screen printing, pottery painting, and the making of high-fired ceramics.

Perhaps it will not be long before some of these students, drawn from the previous group of Hausa Nigerian income artists, make a substantial international reputation.

The author is senior lecturer in art history, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

FOREIGN BUSINESS ?

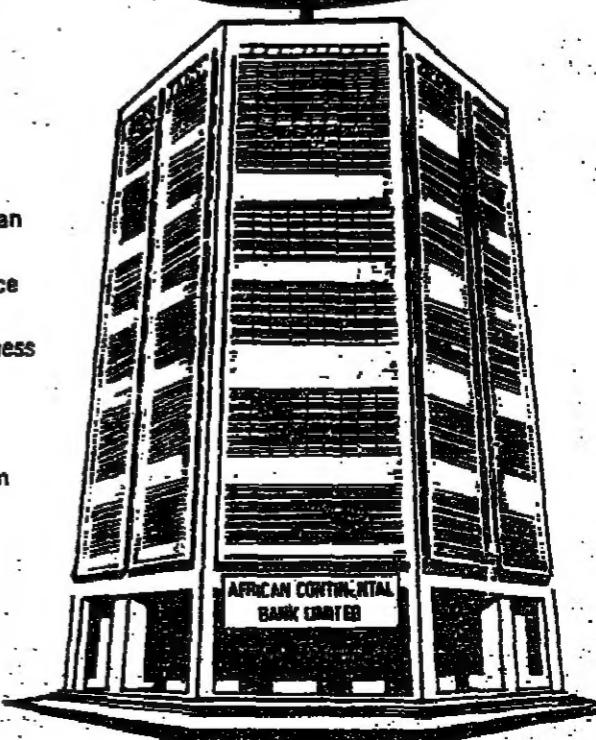


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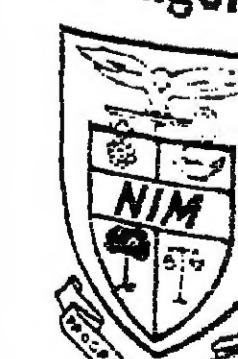


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IBOS

Market place artists portray world of surrealist fantasy

by Ulli Beier

Onitsha market is said to be the largest in Africa, and even before the civil war it was alleged to have a daily turnover of £2m. There is very little that cannot be bought on Onitsha market. The traders there are not merely retailers. Some are importers who then retail their goods to the whole of Nigeria and even as far as Ghana.

The new urban culture of Onitsha, Enugu, Abu, Owerri and Umuahia represents a clean break with tradition. Life was reflected in two popular art forms: the *Taxi Driver*, Romance in a

traditional village life. The city offered a new freedom, and escape (or at least a partial escape) from family obligations. It offered what became to be known as High-life: a hedonistic indulgence in music, drink, romantic love and ostentatious spending. It was a pleasure-loving, but also a romantic life. It was propelled and fuelled by a sense of euphoria that sprang from the knowledge that independence was round the corner.

The titles of the books are suggestive of their contents: *Saturday Night Disappointment*, *Rosemary* and the

Popular Ibo literature is mostly written in English and is produced chiefly by primary school leavers or teenagers or even schoolboys. Printers, whose works in the 1950s by the general editions of one or two thousand, had then been sold out, have now increased to a square, double up to 150,000. There run into initial

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Onitsha market is known as Onitsha market. *Nyachell, Disaster in the Reigns of Love, Public Opinion on Lovers*. Some of them have elaborate subtitles: *Our Modern Ladies Characters towards Boys*; (*The most exciting novel with love letters, drama, telegrams, and campaigns of Miss Beauty to the teacher asking him to marry her*); *Or: Husband and Wife who hate themselves: (It was a forced marriage by Chief Monger; at a result of this everyday so so quarrel, so so talk, so so fight, no peace)*.

The writer's knowledge of English is limited, because few of them had more than a primary education. But such a limitation would not stop a young Ibo from writing

additional pound of flesh". I can best convey the feelings of these novels by quoting a short love scene from my favourite, *Rosemary and the Taxi Driver*:

"They rocked each other, hugging themselves together, feeling the transfer of flirtation and fervourism through the sending over of the warmth which God had wasted time in giving over to any living being, excepting the reptiles. Their intentions were deep, mostly that of Okoro. His sexual instinct was in its worst

trance. They like the lot, the life they played was at the first day of virgin in a honeymoon. How beautiful it is to kiss oneself with one's wife, how lovely it was for Rosemary to feel very shy and sophisticated. Her youthful fidelity was exhausted and they derived into a romantic blast. It was a nice day for men to marry. If it hadn't been that there were no responsible child, it could have been a honeymoon."

However, not all the Onitsha novelists see the city life as one big "romantic blast"; there are other authors, who give themselves names like *Master of Life, Strong Man of the Pen or Money Hard*, who sound a note of warning: they tell us to be wise and beware of women, because they want to draw the money out of our pockets. Their books have titles like: *Money Hard to Get but Easy to Spend*; *Why Harlots Hate Married Men and Love Bachelors*; *Drunkards' Bettie Bar as Heaven*; *Money Hard but Some Women Don't Know*.

However, most of these books are High-life and it is from this atmosphere, which is described in the Onitsha pamphlets that Ibos also developed their new popular art form.

The practitioners are again primary school leavers who have drifted into the city, found themselves unemployed and then—perhaps because they had been good at "art" in primary school—set up shop as sign-writers. A sign-writer does not need much money to set up business. Before the Civil War he could probably rent a tiny room in one of the busy shopping streets for as little as \$3 or \$4 a month. If he did not have that money, he might build himself a shack from old beer boxes or crates in front of the line of shops. A sheet of hard-board, a few brushes and some tins of enamel were all the equipment he needed to start.

The principal clients of the sign-writer were the barber, the tailor, the watchmaker, the herbologist, the truck owner and the bar owner.

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